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LIFE AND TIMES  
OF  
JONATHAN BRYAN  

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1708--1788.



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... OF ...

JONATHAN BRYAN,

1708-1788.

... BY ...

MRS. J. H. REDDING,

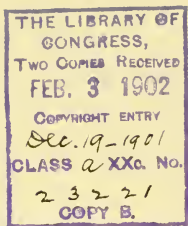
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## CHAPTER I.

South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, by nature and events, have been closely linked together, and their histories so interwoven, it would be impossible to write the biography of one who was born in South Carolina in 1708, and died in Georgia in 1788, whose services, first to the British Crown, and later in the cause of American Independence embraced fifty years of that period, without some description of the scenes in which he lived, and the men with whom he was associated.

The first English colony landed in South Carolina near Port Royal in the year 1670. Settlements were made by several English gentlemen, who purchased the land from a company chartered by Charles II in 1663, under whose corporate authority North Carolina had been colonized. The second governor, Sir John Yeamans, carried with him, in 1671, fifty families of colonists from Barbadoes, and nearly two hundred slaves. In this way slavery was introduced into South Carolina. This colony was strengthened by others, who, filled with the spirit of adventure and thrilled with enthusiasm by descriptions of the country, left the congested centres of civilization in the old world for America, where freedom of conscience and opportunity, like stars of hope, beckoned them onward. Not

only the oppressed and the sons of toil, but the children of luxury were fascinated with such descriptions as Waller's account of an island in this region :

“The lofty cedar which to Heav'n aspires,  
 The prince of trees is fuel for their fires,  
 The sweet Palmettoes a new Bacchus yield,  
 With leaves as ample as the broadest shield,  
 Under the shadow of whose friendly boughs  
 They sit carousing, where their liquor grows.  
 Figs there unplanted through the fields do grow;  
 Such as fierce Cato did the Romans show:  
 With the rare fruit inviting them to spoil  
 Carthage, the mistress of so rich a soil.  
 With candid Plantines and the juicy Pine,  
 On choicest Melons and sweet Grapes they dine,  
 And with Potatoes fat their lusty swine.  
 The kind spring, which but salutes us here,  
 Inhabits there, and courts them all the year.  
 Ripe fruits and blossoms on the same trees live,  
 At once they promise, what at once they give.  
 So sweet the air, so moderate the clime,  
 None sickly lives, or dies before his time,  
 Heav'n sure has kept this spot of earth uncurst,  
 To show how all things were created first.”

From the vast phosphate beds of South Carolina to those of Florida, with the higher elevation of Georgia lying between, a country great enough in extent to

sustain an empire, and with soil and climate unsurpassed, it is not strange that Spain struggled to call this fair land her own from the gold regions of North Georgia to the sea ; nor that, when the colonist reached this country, now divided into three states, with its long coast line washed by the Atlantic and Gulf, gigantic forests filled with game, and rivers great, abounding in life, the imagination could go no further, and some were ready to declare: "Here is the life-giving fountain, the beautiful fountain of youth."

But to the philosopher, the humanitarian, the practical side appeared, and Oglethorpe wrote back to England: "The Colony of Georgia, lying in about the same latitude with part of China, Persia, Palestine and the Madeiras, it is highly probable, that when hereafter it shall be well peopled and rightly cultivated, England may be supplied from thence with raw silk, wine, oil, dyes, drugs and many other materials for manufacture, which she is obliged to purchase from Southern countries."

Antedating the advent of the Indians, the phosphate beds reveal the fact that a dense population once lived here, contemporaneously with all prehistoric animals, and all that now inhabit the earth, and that by some mighty cataclysm these vast sepulchers were made.

This was a land a beneficent Father had prepared for the tramp of the coming hosts of another race, this

the country we know not why, the noblest tribes of the Red Race were destined to yield up, not without a struggle, within a little more than a century.

It has been said: "There is nothing great in the world but man, and nothing great in man, but his soul." If then the pure great souls of those who have walked the earth stand like sentinels along the corridors of time, pointing humanity to higher hopes, and linking us not only to the past, but to reunion hereafter with the innumerable company who have gone before; if, among such as these, we can claim the founders of our republic, may we not justly rejoice in their memories, and leave for our children the glorious heritage of their sufferings and their achievements?

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## CHAPTER II.

In 1680 another small colony of English gentlemen joined the one that arrived at Port Royal in 1670. Among them was Joseph Bryan, of Hereford county, England. But little is known of his life and character, except that his kindness and hospitality won for him and his family the undying friendship of the Yemassee Indians. He married Janet Cochran and they settled in the vicinity of old Pocotaligo. He burnt the bridges behind them, and America henceforth became the home of their descendents. We have the record

of four children born to them ; his oldest son, Joseph, probably in 1697 ; Hugh, in 1699 ; Hannah, in 1706, and Jonathan Bryan, in 1708 ; three weeks later Mrs. Bryan died, leaving the infant son. Joseph Bryan, the first, owned a plantation called Providence, in Prince William's parish, between Pocotaligo and Prince William's Church—the spot is near the line of the Savannah and Charleston railroad, in the vicinity of Yemassee. Calmstead, lying on the right bank of the Pocotaligo, belonged to his son Hugh ; and Walnut Hill, lying between Providence and Calmstead, was settled by Jonathan in 1734. The oldest son, Joseph, gave aid and personal effort to the infant colony of Georgia.

Hugh held many positions of honor and trust, and early in the life of the colony became identified with its interests. An old map gives this record : "South Carolina and a part of Georgia, containing the whole sea coast, all the islands, inlets, rivers, creeks, parishes, and townships, burroughs, roads, bridges, as also several plantations with their proper boundaries and the names of their proprietors, compiled from surveys taken by the Hon. William Bull, Esq., Lieut. Gov. Gascoigne, Hugh Bryan, Esq., and William deBraham, Esq., Surveyor General of the Southern District of North America. Republished with considerable additions made from the surveys made and collected by John Stuart, Esq., His Majesty's Superintendent of Indian Affairs ;

by William Faden, successor to the late T. Jeffrys, Geographer to the King, Charing Cross, 1780."

Twelve years before George I had ceased to reign, and when Louis XIV was about to die, peace had been settled between England and France, and the colonies of these two countries would have been left undisturbed to pursue their own development, but the Spaniards, then in occupation of Florida, claiming that their territory covered the subsequent province of Georgia, extending even to Virginia, were permanent enemies on the Southern frontier of South Carolina. They made allies of unfriendly Indians, and gave refuge to runaway slaves. The whole Indian world from Mobile to Cape Fear was in commotion. The Yemassee of South Carolina, the most warlike of all the Southern tribes, renewed friendly relations with the Spaniards at St. Augustine, won alliances with many other tribes, and on the morning of Good Friday, April 15, 1715 indiscriminate massacre of the English began, hiding by day in the swamps, and by night attacking settlements. All who could fled to Charlestown (afterwards called Charleston), which was also in peril, and the colony seemed near its ruin. At last the deliberate courage of civilized man prevailed, and the savages fled. The colonists checked them on the north, and they vanished into the forest. On the south, Charles Craven, Governor of the province, pursued them; the Yemassee retired into Florida and were warmly wel-



comed to St. Augustine by the Spaniards, with peals from bells and a salute of guns. Gov. Craven, on his return to Charlestown, was greeted with gratitude and applause. The locality where this bloody conflict began is identical with the seat of the Bryan family, who escaped massacre solely because of the kindness shown the Indians by Joseph Bryan. Hugh Bryan was in his seventeenth year, and was carried a captive to Florida. The Indians solicited his death whenever they heard of the success of the Carolinians, but the King interposed in his behalf and would not hurt him, because of regard for his father. While in Florida, where he was held in captivity a year, he found a Bible and a copy of Bishop Beveridge's *Private Thoughts*, both the Indians had taken from some white family they had killed. These were his constant companions, and, surrounded by savages, he found a refuge in God. Later in life he became an ardent follower and close companion of Whitefield.

The third child of Joseph Bryan, Hannah, married William Edwards Cochran. In 1732 Joseph Bryan, Sr., died. But little is known of his life, and he was not prominent in any of the public events of the day, but his influence over the character of his children, and the reverence in which he was held by the Indians, leaves his memory fragrant.

## CHAPTER III.

A painful sense of insecurity took possession of the English colony in South Carolina. They lost four hundred inhabitants in the struggle with the Yemassee, protracted wars and incursions of pirates reduced their numbers and resources, and they decided if an appeal to the Lord Proprietors failed, to apply to the Crown for assistance. The answer to this appeal was unsatisfactory, so their agents, through the House of Commons, besought the King for speedy relief. The King had the difficulties investigated, as North Carolina had also long been agitated by like troubles. The Clarendon charter, extending from lat. 30 to 36 degrees, granted by Charles II of England, was declared forfeited by Parliament 1729. The Lord Proprietors, except Lord Carteret, gave up the contest and sold their interest to the King, in sterling money equivalent to 45,000 Spanish mill dollars; each colony received the same amount. What is now Georgia had been embraced in this charter. Thus ended the unwise experiment of attempting to legislate for people, whose wants were unknown, who cared not for titles nor pageantry, and the constitution prepared for the Lord Proprietors by John Locke, the great English philosopher, called the Grand Model, proved a complete failure. After this the government of North and South Carolina devolved on the Crown, subject to the limitations, fran-



chises and privileges secured to the settlers by charter, although they relinquished all claim to the soil.

It is probable that about this time Jonathan Bryan went to England and received a university education, as twenty-five years later he received an appointment, only given to those who had acquired in these halls of learning a knowledge of English law. (Jones' History of Georgia, Vol. I, page 465.)

It was at this period that James Edward Oglethorpe, the peerless hero of that day, soldier, statesman, philanthropist and a member of parliament, became so interested in the poor of England, whose unjust laws crushed and rendered them powerless to better themselves, also the condition of the distressed and persecuted Salzburgers, that he determined to seek homes for them in America. In 1729 a persecution was begun under Leopold, Duke of Austria, that continued with violence until 1732 against the Salzburgers, so called from Salzburg, the broad valley of the Salza, which lies between the Norric and Rhetian Alps. They were Protestants (Lutherans), and experienced every species of outrage fanaticism could invent. Their property was confiscated; they were whipped, imprisoned, murdered, banished, children torn from parents, husbands from wives, and over thirty thousand were compelled to seek safety in other countries. These were the people whose condition appealed to the great heart of Oglethorpe, and he secured for them a grant of

territory for a colony to be named in honor of the King. It extended "from the head waters of the Savannah river to its mouth ; thence along the coast to the Altamaha ; up that river to its head waters, and thence westerly in direct line from the head waters of said rivers respectively to the South seas," which was equivalent to an indefinite western extension.

The land lying between these two rivers was the same chosen in 1717 by Sir Robert Montgomery to form a province independent of Carolina to be called the Margravate of Azilia. A yearly quit rent of one penny per acre was to be paid to the Lord Proprietors, and the agreement included concessions on both sides. The time limit for settlement was three years from the date of grant, and, failing to secure immigration, it became void.

Now, Oglethorpe undertook to colonize the territory, Sir Robert described as: "The most amiable country of the universe ; that nature has not blessed the world with any tract which can be preferable to it ; that Paradise with all her virgin beauty may be modestly supposed at most, but equal to its excellencies. It lies in the same latitude with Palestine herself that promised Canaan, which was pointed out by God's own choice, to bless the labors of a favorite people."

Fair Georgia, our own loved land, whose meadows and mines, climate, soil, fruits, flowers and game have proven all that these ardent admirers of nature de-

scribed; whose hills and streams, water falls and valleys make her sons and daughters now declare, as the Psalmist of old, that: "She is beautiful for situation, and the joy of the whole earth." This was to be the refuge of the honestly unfortunate, and those who were martyrs in the cause of truth. The land was conveyed to Oglethorpe and twenty-one noblemen and gentlemen to hold in trust for purposes named. Never were more liberal terms granted; never more unselfish service given to humanity. The trustees contributed liberally of their private means, and generous response was made to Oglethorpe's appeal for aid. The whole nation was in sympathy with the enterprise. Great wisdom was displayed in every detail of the plans; the trustees forbade the importation of rum and negro slaves; every precaution was taken to insure success. Papists only were excluded. Great care was exercised in the selection of immigrants; no one was permitted to come who was not by competent authority judged worthy of citizenship. The men were expected to be both soldiers and planters, and for that reason reliable and strong men were selected, who agreed to conform to the terms of the trustees. Oglethorpe, at his own request, bearing his own expenses and that of his servants, took charge of the colony without expectation of reward. At the age of thirty-five he took passage for Georgia on the galley *Anne*, November, 1732. There were a hundred and thirty persons on board. The

Duke of Newcastle, then at the head of colonial affairs, had addressed letters to the governors of the American provinces, commending Oglethorpe and his mission. This royal command, however, was not necessary to insure his welcome to South Carolina. The protection of the colony on the south, the character of the man, the human sympathy for their countrymen from the old world, all aroused deep and earnest interest in the safe arrival of the colony at Charlestown, where the Anne anchored outside the bar, January 13, 1733. The governor, Robert Johnson, gave them a warm welcome, and they were treated with great hospitality. The next day they sailed for Port Royal, and thence to Beaufort, where they arrived in the early morning January 19; they were saluted by artillery; the colonists were invited to land and refresh themselves.

A few days later, Mr. Oglethorpe having left the colonists in South Carolina (where they were most hospitably entertained), with Col. William Bull, landed in Georgia. They speedily sought an interview with Tomochichi, the mico or king of the Yamacraws, a tribe whose town lay near the spot on the high bluff Oglethorpe desired to select for the site of the new town. Two kingly men, representatives of two races and two continents, recognized in each other the nobility of manhood, and the heartbeat of human brotherhood drew them at once to each other. As deep and tender as was Oglethorpe's interest for the Salzburgers

was Tomochichi's for the scattered remnant of the Yemassees. Soon after the treaty was made, which was never broken, he pleaded for these erring ones, whose savage nature had been spurred on by the Spaniards until almost exhausted, now earnestly desired to return to the graves of their ancestors. True to the end, he used his earnest efforts to influence all other tribes to friendly relations with the English. The treaty with the lower Creeks and Uchees was ratified October 18, 1733, and Georgia stands as deeply indebted to Tomochichi as to Oglethorpe for the stability of the colony. Oglethorpe located his tent beneath four tall pines fronting the river; four large tents were pitched to accommodate the colonists until houses could be built. On the afternoon of January 31, 1733, having been two days on their journey from South Carolina, the colonists landed in Georgia. In the early morning of February 2 the people were called together; thanksgiving was offered to God for their safe arrival, and His blessings invoked upon the colony, and

“Amid the aisles of the dim woods rang,  
The anthems of the free.”

## CHAPTER IV.

In the wonderful art exhibit at the World's Fair in Chicago, perhaps no picture left a greater impression on the minds of the hosts, who saw it, than "The landing of Columbus," loaned by a Russian prince. How one in that cold distant clime could paint a landscape so true to nature, so radiant with the glow of our own southern skies, seemed a mystery. Let us see this glorious afternoon in a semi-tropical clime, reproduced in Georgia, with the scene somewhat changed but the surroundings the same. Instead of Columbus and his men, Oglethorpe stands near the tall pines he has selected to overshadow his tent, many are there of whom we have no record, but we can with certainty declare that there were present Col. Bull and his nephew, who had so warmly welcomed and entertained him at their plantations, en route to Georgia. They brought four servants and spent a month aiding and supervising the building of the town. Mr. Whitaker, who had sent from his Carolina plantation one hundred head of cattle for the colonists, and Mr. St. Julian, who came with his servants to render assistance. A messenger sent from Mrs. Ann Drayton with four of her sawyers. Rev. Henry Herbert, a clergyman of the Church of England, who had volunteered to bear his own expenses, and give his services to the colony. Tomochichi, the Indian mico, over ninety years of age, was there,



one of nature's noblemen, whose heartbeat was attuned to the voice of the Great Spirit, and his young heir and nephew Tonahowi, whom he afterwards gave to Oglethorpe to educate. Mary Musgrove (Coosaponakeese), the Indian half-breed woman, who had married an English trader from South Carolina, and became Mr. Oglethorpe's interpreter. Mr. Amatis, an Italian, whose services the trustees had secured to teach the colonists to breed silk worms and wind silk. Mr. Joseph Bryan and his son-in-law, Stephen Bull, who was the nephew of Col. Bull, brought twenty servants for Mr. Oglethorpe to use as he wished. Jonathan Bryan, who was at this time in his twenty-fifth year, and is described in White's Historical Collection, as: "A man of tall and imposing appearance, of great strength and hardihood, and his heart the seat of kindness." Oglethorpe selected him to survey and locate the roads, with the assistance of the twenty men brought by his brother Joseph to clear the woods so that the present Ogeechee and White Bluff roads, leading from Savannah, were the result of his work. Gigantic oaks and magnolias, cedars and myrtle, covered the spot where now the spires of churches and the busy marts of trade are found.

Balmy odors of forest trees, mingled with the perfume of the yellow jessamine, our first herald of spring; song birds innumerable, chief among these feathered warblers, the mocking-birds, filled the air with music.

The pipe of quail and woodcock, the yelp of wild turkeys, often startled the fleet deer and other dwellers in the grand old woods. Amid this glow of beauty and flow of wild music the repose of nature was soon to be broken by the sound of axe and saw.

Other colonists from England joined these during the year, but it was not until March 12, 1734, that the Salzburger arrived and were welcomed by Oglethorpe. They had for several centuries prior to the reformation opposed the corruptions of the Church of Rome, and many bloody persecutions were waged against them. They were compelled to secrete themselves in the most inaccessible mountains of Dauphine, France, Alps of Switzerland and Tyrol. During the reformation they were hunted like wild beasts by emissaries of Rome, and suffered every cruelty and malice man could devise. They kept the faith and were not forsaken. The first company that reached America consisted of forty-two families, and numbered seventy-eight persons. The land allotted to the Salzburger was twenty-five miles from Savannah, first known as St. Matthew's parish and afterwards as Effingham county. They finished their journey as they commenced it, with fervent praise to God for His great goodness as displayed in their past history, but especially in bringing them to so goodly a land. After singing a psalm they set up a rock, which they found upon the spot, and named the place Ebenezer (the stone of help), for they could truly say,



“hitherto hath the Lord helped us.” Thus, with devout gratitude to God and reliance upon His goodness, the foundation was laid for the colony. Soon after the Salzburgers were located Mr. Oglethorpe returned to England, leaving the colony in comfortable houses, but deeply lamenting his departure. He left them accompanied by several English gentlemen and Indians, including Tomochichi, his wife and nephew.

In writing to an English friend of the Indian mico, he said he was “a man of excellent understanding, so desirous of having the young people taught the English language and religion, that notwithstanding his advanced age, he has come over with me to obtain means and assistant teachers.” While in England Mr. Oglethorpe resumed his seat in Parliament and succeeded in securing the passage of two bills, one to prohibit the importation and sale of rum, brandy and other distilled liquors in Georgia, also to prohibit the importation of black slaves or negroes. Both became laws under royal sanction.

After faithful service for the colony in England, he again embarked for Georgia, December 10, 1735, with two vessels, accompanied by many English people and twenty-five German Lutherans. He had persuaded John Wesley also to come as a religious teacher; Charles Wesley, being anxious to go with his brother, accepted the position of private secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe, and

after a long, tempestuous voyage, they reached Savannah, February 4th, 1736.

In this way was laid the foundation for the Empire State of the South, in which Jonathan Bryan took such a conspicuous part. October 13th, 1737, he was married in South Carolina to Miss Mary Williamson, and lived at the plantation, Walnut Hill, settled in 1734, where his son Hugh was born September 7, 1738. Here in this delightful plantation home eight children were born before his removal to Georgia in 1752. He settled other plantations in South Carolina called Cypress and Good Hope. Probably not unlike Washington's home at Mount Vernon were many of the South Carolina and Georgia homes of that time.

In the writer's childhood many a happy day was spent at one near Savannah, built soon after the Revolution. The windows and doors were brought from England, and nearly all the furniture. It was swept away by a torch from Sherman's army, December, 1864.

## CHAPTER V.

The Savannah river, so called from a tribe of Indians bearing that name, now had nestled on its banks the town of the same name, with settlements scattered through the country as far up the river as Ebenezer, the Salzburgers having changed their location to the river front. In 1735 Oglethorpe marked out the site for Augusta, and sent a garrison there the next year. The river became the medium of trade, boats large enough to carry ten thousand pounds of peltry soon navigated the stream, and from Charlestown to Augusta lucrative trade sprung up.

The Spaniards in Florida watched the growth of the colony with jealous eyes, and as their trade laws were not free, found many occasions for strife with the settlers in the new province. Oglethorpe soon realized that he must defend the colony against them, and went to St. Simons Island, where he built a house to live in, and called the place Frederica.

Jonathan Bryan often visited Georgia. He and Mr. Barnwell promised to come with a large force of men from Carolina to his assistance whenever Mr. Oglethorpe required their aid.

At Savannah the colonists were busy in the cultivation of silk worms and winding silk ; also the propagation of mulberry trees, upon which the worms fed, and all kinds of native fruit trees, also many plants and

trees imported from England and the West Indies. On the coast and sea islands constant anxiety about the inroads of the Spaniards, and in Savannah dissensions among the traders, and difficulties between the Italians employed in the silk industry, caused Oglethorpe much anxiety. The settlement that gave him no trouble after the location was changed was the Salzburgers at Ebenezer. In the wild woods, surrounded by Indians, these people, whose hearts were overflowing with gratitude for freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, supervised by Rev. Martin Bolzius, a consecrated and learned man of their own faith, industrious, and scrupulously clean in heart and life, were the very salt of the colony. In 1737 they sent to England 10,000 pounds of raw silk.

The impression made on John Wesley when he came on the same ship with some of them from England, was the beginning of a reconsecration of his life, and through him a spiritual uplift in the religion of the world, unknown since the days of Luther. As the leader of the Reformation had learned that, "The just shall live by faith alone," and endued with the power of God's spirit to proclaim it to the world, so John Wesley learned from these Lutherans, that there were still higher grounds of Christian living; that they had revealed to them, that the soul that is hid with God in Christ Jesus knows that, "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor

things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Here on Georgia soil it was appointed to him to learn of the higher life on earth, to walk through the valley of Baca, assailed doubtless by the unseen forces of evil, as well as those that were known. To his faithful friend Mr. Delamotte he gave the task of gathering the children of Savannah together each Sunday, where they were instructed by John Wesley himself, and here was laid the foundation for Sunday-schools, that later in London was introduced by Robert Raikes. The Lutheran minister and Mr. Jonathan Bryan were also his close friends, as subsequent events proved, so amid the trials through which he passed in a strange land, he was sustained with human sympathy. The disappointment of his sojourn in America was his mission to the Indians; it was impossible to teach many of them, except through interpreters (these were difficult to obtain), and even Tomochichi had learned to know that all of the white race were not like Oglethorpe. He told John Wesley that he longed to be instructed in the Great Word, but hoped that he would not do as the Spaniards had done, "Baptize the Indians before they were taught." Thus Wesley's experience in Georgia prepared him very largely for the work God had in store for him in England, and among the stars that now shine in his crown,

doubtless many Georgia Indians whom he led to Christ are there.

Soon after his return to England Rev. George Whitefield came to Georgia in 1738. Wesley had preached the Law, and although many who heard him bitterly resented the Truth as he saw it revealed, he laid the foundation for the success of Whitefield. In the power of the Gospel, with glowing eloquence, this brilliant man reaped a harvest of souls for eternity. "Paul planted, Appollos watered, God gave the increase." As like attracts like, he visited Ebenezer, and was so impressed with the success of the school and orphanage conducted by the Salzburgers, that he returned to England in 1741, to secure funds to found the school at Bethesda, that is to this day a monument to his zeal, and the liberality of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon.

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## CHAPTER VI.

In 1737 Oglethorpe went to England to obtain troops to enable him to reinforce the colonies against the Spaniards. He raised and equipped a regiment of 600 men, was given the command of all the forces in South Carolina and Georgia, and was henceforth General Oglethorpe. War was declared by England with Spain in 1739, but before this Gen. Oglethorpe, through Tom-

ochichi, secured a treaty with all the Indian tribes east of the Mississippi.

His diplomacy, the superb courage of his perilous trip to Coweta, where the treaties were ratified, leaves him without a peer in the annals of Indian warfare. Having received orders in 1740 to invade Florida, he called upon South Carolina for aid, and at the head of 2,000 men, consisting of the regiment he brought from England, troops from Carolina, and also a company of gentlemen volunteers from that colony, the Georgia militia, and some friendly Indians, in the spring of 1740 he led them into Florida, for the purpose of capturing St. Augustine.

Among the volunteers who joined the expedition were Joseph and Lieutenant Jonathan Bryan. They arrived at the camp at St. Johns May 22d. On the 24th they removed with a detachment of the Carolina regiment to Fort Diego, captured from the enemy about twenty miles from St. Augustine. Here Oglethorpe had established a fortified camp. The General, in the evening, marched out of his camp at Fort Diego, with about 100 men of his regiment, with Lt. Bryan and six of the volunteers, and a party of Indians.

On the 26th of May, having marched all night, at daybreak they came within five or six miles of St. Augustine, and in sight of five scattered houses, in some of which smoke appeared. Therefore, having called the whole body to halt, at about quarter mile distance,



he ordered Lt. Bryan with six volunteers under him to march up and attack the houses. They searched every one of them and brought forth two negro prisoners. For want of more assistance, the General then advancing with the whole party, said : "Well, I see that the Carolina men have courage, but no conduct." To which Lt. Bryan replied : "Sir, the conduct is yours." The volunteers would have burnt the houses, but the General refused to permit them to do it, saying that they would serve for the inhabitants that he would bring there.

The two negroes confessed that they had run away from South Carolina, and according to one of their stipulations with the General, were redeemable to the owners upon paying five pounds per head to the captors. The volunteers agreed to pay him half the salvage and keep them, or to receive half and give them to him. but the General declining a property in them, refused both and took them to himself. He had previously, at Ft. Diego, taken from these volunteers several horses which they had caught to carry their baggage, and although cattle were in plenty, it was very difficult for them to obtain fresh provisions. The General was acquainted with this, but said that Diego Spinola should be paid for all that were killed. This man, entitled Seigneur in the articles of capitulation at Ft. Diego, was a mulatto who supplied the garrison at St. Augustine with beef.



Ft. Diego had been his property, a cow pen and a house, and for his own safety from the Indians he had had them palisaded around with cedars fifteen feet high

Before day, June 2d, Moosa, an abandoned fort very near St. Augustine, was occupied by Oglethorpe, who proceeded to reconnoitre the main fort and the town. He refused to burn the town although advised to do so by Col. Palmer. Lt. Bryan of the volunteers, with three or four rangers, went close up to the town and brought off three horses. He found the town in confusion, the inhabitants shrieking and crying. Upon his return he asked the General if it would not be best to attack the town then, for if he retreated they would make preparations against his return. The General replied, that if he should attempt to storm the town he would lose 300 men. Deserters afterwards reported that the government had ordered the inhabitants, in case of attack, to go into the castle. On the 5th of June the volunteers, except the General's aid, feeling dissatisfied at their treatment, and disappointed in the expectation of attacking the town, returned to St. Johns. There meeting the rest of the company just returned, Lt. Bryan proceeded no further himself. but joined them. Oglethorpe took possession of Anastasia Island and proceeded to the investment of St. Augustine. Ft. Moosa was attacked by night, Col. Palmer, twenty Highlanders, some Indians, and a few others

were killed, and the garrison driven out. Nothing of importance was accomplished by the investment. The English naval auxiliaries determined, on account of storms and other reasons, to raise the blockade of the harbor. Oglethorpe abandoned the siege and retired in July, 1740. The failure of the expedition caused deep mortification, the Carolina troops were accused as one of the causes of the failure, an investigation was ordered by the General Assembly of South Carolina, and they were fully exonerated.

The grim monster, Pestilence, that follows war probably had much to do with the failure of the expedition. In a warm climate, destitute of many necessities and all the comforts of life, both body and spirit failed, and even Gen. Oglethorpe, who reached Frederica July 10th, 1740, lay ill of fever for two months in the only home he ever had on Georgia soil. During the life of the colony, seven years, he had labored unceasingly for its safety and preservation. In these days of physical exhaustion his cheerfulness never deserted him. On this island home, surrounded by beautiful gardens of fruits and flowers, fanned by ocean breezes, his physical and mental strength was renewed. Here he determined to gather his troops around him, and defend the colony against the foe. History records no higher courage, no better generalship than the defense of St. Simons Island, and it was there, July, 1742, that the Spaniards in America learned that their struggle with

England must cease, and later received the repulse, from which they never rallied.

On the 23<sup>d</sup> of July, 1743, Oglethorpe left Georgia never to return. In England, Sept. 15th, 1744, he married a lady of wealth, beauty and many accomplishments. In 1765 he was given command of His Majesty's army. When the colonies revolted, he was offered the command of the British army in America. His reply was: "I know the Americans well. They can never be subdued by arms, but their obedience can be secured by doing them justice." He refused the command because it did not carry with it the privilege of complete control over questions of grievances and reconciliation. He died in August, 1785, at the advanced age of 97 years. Though neither bronze nor marble records it in Georgia, it is writ in human hearts: He loved his fellow man.

## CHAPTER VII.

Homeward turned the Carolina volunteers in July, 1740, through Georgia, of course, they traveled. On a warm day, much fatigued and disappointed, they reached Bethesda, the home and school founded by George Whitefield, near Savannah. The previous January, Mr. Whitefield had been the guest of Mr. Hugh Bryan at one of his plantation homes in Carolina. There Jonathan Bryan and Stephen Bull met

him. Now these weary and foot-sore soldiers received a warm greeting from Mr. Whitefield, and were invited to rest a while at Bethesda. They gladly accepted the invitation, and were refreshed in body and soul. With the ocean breezes fanning the gigantic trees festooned with graceful vines, the odor of magnolia blooms filling the air, and mocking-birds trilling every note in the scale, they were reminded of their own homes in Carolina, with loved ones eagerly awaiting their return, but to hear the most eloquent preacher of that day, to sit at his feet and learn of spiritual things, was the attraction that made them linger by the way. They belonged to the Church of England and had been brought up in its fold, but under the power given to this leader in the hosts of God's Israel, Jonathan Bryan became deeply convicted of sin and greatly concerned about his spiritual welfare. "He returned home rejoicing in hope."

The next month Mr. Whitefield was in Charlestown on his way to Boston, and Jonathan Bryan and Mr. Bull again sought him, to be more established in the right way. But it was not until the following October he makes this entry in his Bible: "John 3, v and vi. My conversion from corruption to Christianity, the time whereof I bless God, I well remember was October 24th, 1740. O, that this day may be much to be remembered by me when I was brought out of

spiritual bondage into the glorious liberty of the Son of God.

“Praise the Lord O, my soul!  
While I live I will praise the Lord,  
And magnify Him while I have my being!

<sup>TH</sup>  
JON— BRYAN.”

In 1741 Mr. Whitefield, en route to England, embarked at Charlestown. Before reaching Charlestown he stopped at Good Hope, near Port Royal, a plantation where Jonathan Bryan was now residing, and was entertained in the hospitable style of Colonial Days. The advent of this man, so full of the life and power of the Holy Spirit, drew crowds around him wherever he stopped on his journeys. The effect of his discourses, the ability to explain God's Word and its power upon his hearers cannot better be explained than in the following extract from a letter written by Hugh Bryan to his sister, dated Feb. 8th, 1740: “My sins, which I had overlooked, now stared me in the face. I saw that my natural mildness of temper, gravity, kindness, liberality, justice and temperance, not leading me into the excesses of wrath, envying, licentiousness, hard heartedness, covetousness, fraud and profaneness, which many others fell into, had deceived me. On the other hand, the innate polluteness of my soul, as worldliness and self-love, applause of men, lukewarmness,

ingratitude to God, slothfulness in His service, unprofitable and sinful thoughts and discourse, these and many more sins of the like nature, I found had laid under covert in the secret recesses of my soul, unobserved till now on a strict search, assisted by the light of God's Spirit, I discovered them to my great amazement."

Hugh Bryan was a man full of emotion and his religious feeling often led him into rhapsodies. His brother Jonathan was of sterner mold, but his piety was earnest and practical, and accompanied the whole conduct of his long eventful life. After the Bible record of his thirteen children, he writes in a vein of prayerful solicitude and tenderness: "O, Lord! grant that they may all be born of Thy Spirit, and may be a seed to serve Thee in their day and generation."

In 1742 the Spaniards invaded Georgia, and Mr. James Habersham, then in charge of the Bethesda Home, in the absence of Mr. Whitefield in England, moved the household, consisting of eighty-six, to South Carolina, where they were entertained at the plantations of Jonathan Bryan and Stephen Bull about six months, until the Spaniards had withdrawn.

When Mr. Whitefield came to America he was strongly opposed to the introduction of negro slaves, but contrasting the condition of the negroes on the Carolina plantations with those in Africa, he changed his mind and advocated their introduction into Geor-

gia. He was sharply reproved for speaking in favor of slavery by Rev. Martin Bolzius, the minister in charge of the Salzburgers, a man of great learning and executive ability ; but he firmly held the position and declared that Africa would be more speedily Christianized by Christian negroes from America than in any other way. He saw many of them in Carolina converted to Christ, and the work of civilization progress on the plantations, as he knew it could not in the dark continent. Surrounded by an atmosphere of religious excitement and reformation, Jonathan Bryan became deeply interested in this grave question of bringing the salvation of Christ to the negro. He did personal work among them, and gave the use of his barns for preaching and teaching their children.

The colonists in Georgia, moved by Mr. Whitefield's influence and yielding to the policy of the Mother Country, allowed the introduction of negro slaves in 1751. The same year Jonathan Bryan settled a plantation in Georgia, and moved into this colony with his family—wife, six sons and one daughter—one son having died in Carolina in October, 1749.

We find in his memoranda this record : "I began to settle my new plantation in Georgia, January 1st, 1751. I removed with my family from South Carolina, August 27th, 1752, settled the Monmouth January 22, 1752. I began to settle Seven Oaks, November 8th, 1764; our family removed there February 18th, 1765.



The year 1766 memorable for that most detestible act of Parliament called the Stamp Act. The greatest hurricane in the memory of man was in 1764, on Thursday and Friday, 14th and 15th of September, succeeded by another, 30th, the same month."

He also owned Brewton Hill, which was at that time the largest rice plantation in America, and the Union, twelve miles above Savannah, near the spot the Charleston and Savannah Railroad bridge crosses the Savannah river. He named two of his plantations for the country seats of the Bryan family in Hereford county England, Dean Forest and Brampton. The latter is three miles above Savannah on the river, and was probably his residence the greater part of each year.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

In June, 1752, one year prior to the time that the Trustees' charter expired, they surrendered it to the Crown. The government then devolved on the board of trade and plantations, of which the Earl of Halifax was the head, subject to the authority of the Crown. Captain John Reynolds of the navy was appointed Governor, and the constitution of the colony was modified. The legislature or General Assembly was to consist of two houses, one known as Councillors, the other as Representatives, who in conjunction with the



Governor were to have full law-making power, subject to the board of trade and plantations, and ultimate veto of the Crown. The Councillors or upper house were colonists, appointed by the King. The representatives of the lower house were chosen by the people. A new judicial system was introduced by the constitution. A general court was created consisting of two judges and an attorney general, with the right of appeal to the Governor and his council; in certain cases where more was involved to the board of trade and plantations, and in last resort to the King. The judges appointed were Noble Jones and Jonathan Bryan. A Court of Chancery and Admiralty was at the same time established, and James Edward Powell was appointed Judge Advocate.

The first general assembly met March 16th, 1754. Patrick Graham, Sir Patrick Houstoun, Bart., James Habersham, Alexander Kellet, William Clifton, Noble Jones, Pickering Robinson, Francis Harris, William Russell, Clement Martin and Jonathan Bryan were confirmed as the Governor's council for the colony. This body divided the province into eight parishes.

In 1757, under the administration of Gov. Ellis, when the peace of Georgia seemed to be threatened by French intrigues with the Indians, the Governors of South Carolina and Georgia agreed to invite the Indians to hospitable entertainment at Charleston and Savannah, and at the same time impress them with the

military strength of the provinces. At Savannah they were received by a hundred Virginia Provincials, detailed for the purpose by the Georgia Rangers, and by the First Georgia Militia, commanded by Col. Noble Jones. Sixteen cannon were mounted in the batteries about Savannah, and seven field pieces were placed in front of the Governor's dwelling. The Indians escorted by Capt. Milledge and the Rangers, "were met beyond the lines by Capt. Jonathan Bryan and a cavalcade of citizens, who welcomed them in the name of the Governor, and regaled them in a tent pitched for that purpose." Gov. Ellis' administration was very popular, but on account of the infirmities of age he was compelled to resign. In 1760, James Wright, Esq., subsequently created a baronet, the third and last of the provincial governors of Georgia, entered upon his office. He was destined to have with Jonathan Bryan some notable embroglios. The new governor was a native of South Carolina, a lawyer by profession, and for a long period was attorney general of that province. His large experience in public affairs, high character and distinguished loyalty to the British Crown, secured his appointment to this important office. In ordinary times these qualities would have peculiarly fitted him for the position. At the time of his appointment the white population of Georgia numbered 6,000 and the negro slaves 3,578. It increased rapidly under his administration and in 1776 numbered 50,000. Savannah

was much improved, and became so noted for its healthfulness that many planters from South Carolina resorted there during the summers. The dense forests on Hutchinson's Island, also to the east and west of the town, cut off the malaria from the Carolina rice fields.

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## CHAPTER IX.

But the revolution was approaching, and the extreme views of the governor did not accord with those of the people. The great principle that there can be "no taxation without representation," was deep-rooted in their minds. Gov. Wright declared this absurd, in view of the supremacy of the British Parliament, and condemned the General Assembly of the province for its approving response to the representatives of the province of Massachusetts Bay, and to the Speaker of the Virginia House of Burgesses, as to the measures by them pursued to obtain redress of their common grievances, and dissolved the General Assembly of Georgia.

But in 1768 that body had already framed and immediately transmitted through Dr. Benjamin Franklin, its agent in London, an address to the King, complaining of the tax acts of Parliament, lamenting that by "their imposition of internal taxes we are deprived of the privilege, which with humble deference

we apprehend to be an indutiable right, that of granting away our own property." This and all these petitions for redress and reform having failed, the Georgians united with the colonies in resolutions of refusal to import any British goods, which they could produce for themselves. A meeting of merchants was held in Savannah, September 16th, 1769, in which such measures were adopted. Following this, September 17th, 1769, a public meeting was held, at which Jonathan Bryan presided. Resolutions were passed and ordered to be published in the next issue of the Georgia Gazette, then the only newspaper published in the province. The preamble of these resolutions clearly and forcibly express the grievances of the people: "We, the inhabitants of Georgia, finding ourselves reduced to the greatest distress and most abject condition by several acts of the British Legislature, by means whereof our property is arbitrarily wrested from us, contrary to the true spirit of our constitution, and the repeatedly confirmed birthright of every Briton, under all these aggressions finding that the most dutiful and loyal petitions from the colony for the redress of the grievances have not answered the salutary purpose we intended, and being destitute of all hope of relief from our multiplied and increasing distress, by our industry, frugality and economy, are firmly resolved never to be in the least accessory to the loss of any privilege we are entitled to." "Therefore, we, whose names are herein

subscribed, do solemnly agree to and with one another, that until said acts are repealed, we will most faithfully abide by and adhere to, and fulfill the following resolutions." Then, briefly condensed, follow the pledges: "First, To promote and encourage American manufactures, and of this province in particular. 2nd. To raise sheep for the wool. 3rd. To promote raising of cotton and flax and encourage spinning and weaving. 4th. On no pretense to import British, European or East India goods, except the cheapest variety." The kinds are stated, showing that the colony was almost absolutely dependent on Great Britain and foreign countries for supplies. "5th. To neither purchase nor give mourning at funerals. 6th. Not to import, buy or sell after July 1st, 1770, any negroes brought into the province. 7th. Not to purchase negroes already imported, or goods, wares or merchandise from any person refusing to sign the agreement within five weeks from date thereof, and every person signing and not strictly adhering to the agreement, and also every one not subscribing, shall be looked upon as no friend to the country." When we realize that the Stamp Act passed in 1765, imposing a duty on all paper, vellum and parchment used in the American colonies, and declaring all writings on unstamped material to be null and void, it is not strange that it aroused general opposition in the colonies. When it was repealed and other concessions

made, Gov. Wright represented to the Royal Government "That these indulgencies gave encouragement to the Americans, bringing conviction to them that their demands had not only been legal and constitutional, but right in themselves;" also "that the disease having been, in some measure, promoted and encouraged by the Mother Country," adds: "I perceive the remedy and reform must come from them likewise."

Jonathan Bryan was a member of the Royal Council, and a motion was then made for his expulsion, which was not then acted upon, but when informed that he had presided over the meeting, the King was greatly incensed, and ordered him suspended from this and any other office he might hold in the province. This order was reported in a letter to the Earl of Hillsborough by Gov. Wright, December 9th, 1769, but the removal of Mr. Bryan from office was not reported to the Earl by Gov. Wright until March 1st, 1770. The order of deposition from the Crown came some months after this occurrence, but as Mr. Bryan was a member of the Royal Council as late as July, 1774, when he resigned, it is doubtful, at least, whether the order was ever carried out. It raised him still higher in the estimation of the people, and made for him the first martyr to the revolution in Georgia. It was regarded as a tyrannical act on the part of the King. As a member of the council he occupied a dual position—first, as an advisor to the Governor; second, as a member of the



Upper House or Assembly. In either case he was entitled to his opinions and their expression. Without these, both councillor and legislator become the mere instrument of tyranny and corruption. The members of the Governor's Council were required to subscribe to the Test Oath and the Oath of Allegiance, but it cannot be shown that Mr. Bryan, in presiding over the non-importation meeting, was wanting in just observance of any of these oaths. There was nothing revolutionary in the proceedings; they betrayed nothing more than grave dissatisfaction with the acts of the British Parliament, which had reduced them to great distress, which they regarded as unconstitutional, and which were eloquently condemned in Parliament. They resolved upon no measure of violence, and only on such a course of action as may be pursued by individuals or communities for self-protection and for commercial and industrial independence. The Royal Cabinet was divided as to the issue at stake, and Lord North himself, the Prime Minister, was in favor of repeal, but submitted his veto to the King, whose rule was rarely to forgive a grievance. In ordering the removal of Jonathan Bryan, he attempted that which he dared not execute on one of his own cabinet, who opposed the same measures. Doubtless at this same period, he entertained not a single sentiment disloyal to the King; such seems to have been his public reputation. At a dinner given in



Charleston, May 31st, 1770, in celebration of the landing of the statue of William Pitt, one of the regular toasts announced was to the Hon. Jonathan Bryan. A number of toasts were offered, among them to Gov. Bull, nor was the King forgotten. The Carolina Gazette, describing the occasion, speaks of Mr. Bryan as a distinguished Whig of Georgia.

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## CHAPTER X.

Deep and earnest as was the interest of Mr. Bryan in all the public affairs of the colony it did not interfere with his personal duties to his church, his home or his slaves. Five children were born to him in Georgia. Seven had died in early youth, leaving at this time four sons and two daughters: Hugh, born September 7th, 1738; Mary, February 16th, 1745; Josiah, August 22, 1746; William, January 21st, 1748; James, September 22, 1752; Hannah, October 7th, 1757. Mary Bryan married in 1766 John Morel, who died January 3rd, 1776. She was afterwards married to Col. Richard Wylly. Josiah Bryan was married October 14th, 1770, to Elizabeth Pendarvis. He died in 1774. William Bryan was a physician, and never married.

When Jonathan Bryan was attached to the Church of England in 1736 he was appointed with Stephen Bull, Hugh Bryan, Joseph Izard and John Mulryne

to build a chapel on Combahee river, St. Helena Parish, S. C. After having been brought in close relations with Wesley and Whitefield his spiritual life was quickened. What was called Mr. Whitefield's irregularities caused "Rev. Alexander Garden to suspend him from office." Doubtless the Bryans espoused his cause. This, with the limited church privileges of their section, caused them to separate from the Church of England in 1740. The Methodists' schism had not then occurred, and the Bryans attached themselves to the Presbyterian church. In 1742 he with his brothers Joseph and Hugh, and Stephen Bull organized the Stony Creek Independent Presbyterian Church, of which Hugh and himself were deacons. A copy of a letter he received from Mr. Whitefield is in the old South Library, Boston, No. 530. "A letter to the negroes lately converted in America, and particularly those lately called out of darkness into God's marvelous life, at Mr. Jonathan Bryan's in South Carolina. A welcome to the believing negroes in the Household of God, by a friend and servant of theirs in England. Eph. III-2. London, J. Hart, 1743."

Andrew, one of his favorite servants, born 1716, died 1812, was an ordained Baptist minister, and preached in his master's barn at Brampton. He was the founder of the first colored church in Savannah, was given his freedom and allowed a lot in Savannah belonging to his master to build a house upon. This

spot has ever been consecrated to their worship. Upon it now stands the Bryan Baptist Church.

With the fervor and loud demonstrations of the negroes at their religious services it was supposed on one occasion that they were plotting mischief, and Andrew was arrested and whipped. His master interceded for him, the matter was examined by several leading citizens, there was no evidence that the slaves were in mischief, and Andrew obtained permission from the Chief Justice to continue to preach. The following is part of the inscription on his tombstone: "He has done more among the poor slaves than all the learned doctors in America. He was imprisoned for the Gospel and without any ceremony whipped, but was willing to suffer death for the cause of Christ. He was an honor to human nature, an ornament to religion, and a friend to mankind."

As an evidence that Mr. Bryan's interest in the religious instruction among the negroes never ceased, the following letter is found in Volume V, Methodist Magazine, 1785:

"NEW YORK, April 1st, 1772."

*"Reverend Sir :*

"By a letter from Mr. Lloyd, from London, we are informed that you incline to visit America. Mr. Whitefield's preaching was of unspeakable use to many, but he preached mostly in seaport towns and the most populous parts of the province, where the gospel was

known, though not preached in power. In the back parts which are now grown populous the inhabitants are still in a state of deplorable ignorance. If some zealous and able teacher would engage heartily in the work of their conversion, how soon might rivers spring forth in the desert, and these owls and dragons of the wilderness give honour to God. No doubt many in England and elsewhere, who abound in wealth, would contribute toward erecting schools to teach the children, and also toward the support of preachers, if such an undertaking was properly set on foot. But who is qualified for this work? I know none except yourself.

“But, Dear Sir, what concerns me more than all, is the unhappy conditions of our negroes, who are kept in worse than Egyptian bondage. The clothes we wear, the food we eat, and all the superfluities we possess, are the produce of their labors, and what do they receive in return? Nothing equivalent. On the contrary we keep from them the key of knowledge, so that their bodies and souls perish together in our service. If, therefore, you are not too advanced in years, I say to you, in the name of God come over and help us; in doing which you will greatly oblige many thousands, but among the rest,

“Your friend and brother,

“JONATHAN BRYAN.”

Jonathan Bryan was one of the truest and purest types of the southern planter. Thousands like him, as faithful to God and man have gone to rest with the

slaveholders Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So faithfully did they discharge their trust to the negro race, that in time of peril they could safely trust them. The occasional exception to this rule proved its truth.

During the war between the States, a hundred and twenty years later, when six hundred thousand southern men, the strength of the land and the flower of its youth, went forth to fight as Washington did for constitutional republican liberty, they left their women and children and their aged ones to the care of their negro slaves. With faithful toil they labored to maintain them and supply their masters in the field with bread. Unsurpassed in the annals of history was their loyalty to the southern people, and rare indeed was found any lawlessness among them. Even when the Emancipation Proclamation was issued with the hope of causing insurrection in the South, they were unmoved in their devotion to their owners. So far superior were their morals and manners to those of this era, thirty-six years after emancipation, that it is refreshing to find one who had even a few years' training under the old regime.

The Hebrews were held in bondage in Egypt two hundred and fifteen years; the Africans in England and America exactly the same length of time; they were brought to Georgia against the protest of a majority of her people; when the Ruler of the Universe, who marks even the sparrow's fall, saw fit to release them, it was done.

## CHAPTER XI.

Responding to a call dated July 20th, 1774, a number of the freeholders and inhabitants of the province held a meeting in the Watch House, in Savannah, to take action as to the critical situation growing out of the late acts of the British Parliament, as to the town of Boston, as well as to the acts tending to raise a perpetual revenue without the consent of the people, or their representatives. John Glenn presided, and the meeting authorized a committee of thirty-one to prepare resolutions similar to those adopted by the Northern colonies, and expressive of the sentiments and determination of this province. Mr. Bryan was one of this committee. The meeting adjourned until the 10th of August, that invitations might be extended to delegations from other parishes. August 5th, Gov. Wright issued a proclamation declaring the meeting "unlawful, and its acts unconstitutional, illegal and punishable by law." Nevertheless, the adjourned meeting, now a general meeting of the inhabitants of the province, was held at Tondee's Tavern, in Savannah, August 10th, 1774, declaring the rights of the colonies, denouncing the acts of Parliament, concurring with sister colonies in every constitutional measure to obtain redress of American grievances. Before Gov. Wright's proclamation was issued, he convened his council to advise as to the best means of checking the

proceedings of the people, and, as Jonathan Bryan's name was on the list of the committee, a motion was made to expel him from his seat in the council. But as McCall's History says: "Mr. Bryan, with patriotic indignation, informed them in a manner peculiar to himself, for its candor and energy, that he would save them the trouble, and handed his resignation to the Governor."

The Union Society, controlling Bethesda Home, then as now, composed of the representative men of the community, recognizing the patriotic course of Mr. Bryan and the personal sacrifice he was offering to the public cause, presented him with a silver vase, now in possession of Mr. Joseph Bryan, of Richmond, Va. The vase bears the following inscription:

"To  
Jonathan Bryan, Esq.,  
who, for publicly appearing in  
favor of the rights and liberties  
of the people, was excluded from  
his Majesty's council of this  
province, this piece of plate, as  
a mark of their esteem, is present-  
ed by the Union Society in  
Georgia."

(obverse) - "*Ita cuique eveniat de republica meruit.*"



Public affairs were now the object of intense interest to all, especially in Savannah, where the two forces, the Tories led by Gov. Wright on the side of the Crown, and the Whigs for the colonies, had culminated in the meeting at Tondee's Tavern, August 10th, 1774. The issue seemed for the Crown or for the country. Gov. Wright began to realize that the majority were for the rights of the people. With all his talent, diplomacy seemed to have failed, so now the arts of the politician were all that was left by which he could hope to win his cause. To strike at one of the leaders of the Whig faction was his strongest weapon, an opportunity seemed to open for him in an unexpected way.

Near the close of the Provincial Congress that convened October 18th, 20th, 1774, Gov. Wright had read before that body a treaty made by Jonathan Bryan and certain prominent citizens of East Florida, with twenty-one head men, warriors, chiefs and kings of the Creek Nation. There were discrepancies that doubtless were well understood by the public at that time, but now cannot be explained. One of these was that the treaty or lease was dated October 28th, 1774, but was read before the Assembly October 20th. The effective portion was as follows: "For and in consideration of one hundred pounds sterling, lawful money of the Province of Georgia, to them in hand paid, at and before the sealing of these presents and receipt whereof is here-

by acknowledged, and also for and in consideration of the great regard they bear to the said Jonathan Bryan, have and each of them hath, in behalf of themselves, their heirs and successors, and behalf also of the Creek Nation, devised, granted, and to farm let unto the said Jonathan Bryan, his heirs, executors and administrators, all that plantation tract or parcel of land known by the name of Locheway, and the Appalachee river to the north, by the line drawn part of the said river, where the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers meet, to the source of the St. Mary's river, and from thence on a southwest course, on a direct line to the Gulf of Mexico, being in part, of the land belonging to the Creek Nation, together with all the premises and appurtenances thereto belonging. To have and to hold the said tract or parcel of land and premises before mentioned, with the appurtenances, unto the said Jonathan Bryan, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, from the date of these premises, for and during and until the full term of four-score and nineteen years from thence, and next enduring and fully to be complete and ended. Yielding and paying therefor yearly, and every year, unto the said Chehaw Kako, and other lessees, their heirs or successors, the rent of one hundred bushels of Indian corn, delivered on some convenient parcel or tract of land."

John Stuart, at that time Indian Superintendent, Noble Jones, J. E. Powell, Clement Martin, Jr., John

Graham, Lewis Johnson, James Read and James Hume united in the following published statement, substantially confirmed by Anthony Stokes, Chief Justice of the Province (formerly associated with Jonathan Bryan in the General Court):

“When all the other business of the Congress was finished His Excellency Gov. Wright produced the deed and directed the interpreter to inform the Indians of it, and to acquaint them that he was greatly surprised that they should be so tenacious of their lands whenever a request was made in behalf of the Government, and that they should give away so large a body to an individual. The countenances of the Indians sufficiently denoted their astonishment. Talachee one of those who had put his mark to the deed, declared the whole transaction which was interpreted to them was as follows: When he and others came down to mark, that Mr. Bryan came to them and brought with him some white men and an Indian wench named Maria. who could speak English, and requested by her to have a spot of land to settle a cowpen and raise some corn upon, that he meant to come and live among them and settle a store. That he also understood that the paper contained a good talk to the Nation; that he and the rest of them, after being followed to Woods’ saw-mill, put their mark to it but told Mr. Bryan at the same time they must carry it to the Nation to have it confirmed there; but that it was never

presented to the Nation.' The other Indians who were at the Congress seemed much annoyed. One said that he would not leave the house till the paper was burnt, and one in particular declared that it was his opinion if the paper was not destroyed the Nation would not believe what had passed at the Congress. His Excellency requested that the deed might not be destroyed, but the Indians might, if they pleased, tear off their seals and marks, which at their request was done, and added also, 'It will sufficiently open the eyes of the public.' "

Chief Justice Stokes in his statement adds: "Upon the whole it did appear and still does appear, that the Indians were deceived and that the lease was obtained by misrepresentation." The deposition of the two loyalists, Jacob Moniac and Samuel Thomas, sworn interpreters to the upper and lower Creek Nations, taken before Justice Stokes, reaffirms the foregoing statement and Talachee's declaration before the Congress, he being the principal speaker. "That the Tonkabachee warrior had said they were all deceived, that the Coweta warrior said if the aforesaid paper was not destroyed, that the head men and chiefs in the Nation would not believe what was done at said Congress." Talachee himself after seeing said paper and the seals thereon, laid hold of it, and would have his seal torn off. His Excellency Gov. Wright at the request of the Indians ordered Mr. Wylly, the Clerk of the Council,

to cut off all the seals, and told the Indians that he would not permit the paper to be destroyed, that he wanted to have a copy made to send to the Governor of Florida; that Talachee told His Excellency that Maria, wife to St. Diego, was interpreter between Mr. Bryan and the Indians, and that the day after the Congress Maria, being desirous of exculpating herself, came to Jacob Moniac, one of the deponents, and took him to Mr. Bryan, and she, Maria, said: "Mr. Bryan, I am accused by the chiefs and the head men of the Nation to have interpreted, to have given away a large portion of land;" and also said, "I have now brought the interpreter with me, and I desire you to tell him before all the Indians now present what you told me to interpret to the Indians then present." That Mr. Bryan answered: "He had asked the Indians for a piece of land, that the Indians asked him, 'Where do you want it, on the Okonee or the Altamaha river?' To which he answered: 'No, I do not want it in this Province, for the Governor of Georgia and I do not agree,' and further added, he wanted it where he could bring great boats up." That the Indians then asked him what he wanted it for? to which he answered, that he had great flocks of cattle, and if they would give him land in the Appalachee Old Fields, or on the mouth of the Flint river, he would come and live among them and make a town larger than Savannah, and would get a great number of friends to come and live with him, but if it

was not agreeable to the whole Nation, men, women and children, he would not insist on it. Jacob Moniac further deposed, that Mr. Bryan in the conversation with Maria further said: "If I find it disagreeable to the whole Nation I shall not trouble myself any more about it," and added, "The land is your own, it neither belongs to the King nor the Governor, and you may do as you please with it."

Samuel Thomas, the other deponent, for his part sayeth: "Having had frequent talks with the chiefs, head men and warriors of the Nation since the said Congress, that they were all angry at such a paper being wrote, particularly Pumpkin King, the Chehaw warrior, Talachee, and several other head men and warriors. Mr. Tate, the deputy superintendent, desired this deponent Thomas to acquaint them that the Hon. Mr. Stuart, superintendent, had heard that Mr. Bryan had reported, that many or all of them had been at his house begging him to take them back. In answer to which all of those now present, except Talachee, denied having been there to offer back the land; that if any Indians had been there it must have been their young men, and if they had been at Mr. Bryan's house, it was of no consequence. Talachee said that he had been at Mr. Bryan's house and had drunk a glass of wine.

"And also this deponent Thomas further sayeth, that all the aforementioned chiefs, head men and warriors



declared if any white man settled there, meaning, as this deponent believes, the land supposed to be leased to Mr. Bryan, it would be attended with bad consequences; and the Coweta warrior said to this deponent last night that if the papers had not been destroyed, it was the only thing that would have occasioned a war with the white people, and lastly these deponents say, that from what passed at the Congress, and from several conversations they have since had with the Indians, they do believe the said writing was obtained by deceiving the Indians.

“Sworn to in the Province of Georgia the day and year first above written.

“ANTHONY STOKES.

<sup>his</sup>  
“JACOB x MONIAC.

<sup>mark</sup>  
“SAMUEL THOMAS.”

## CHAPTER XII.

These publications appeared in the Georgia Gazette, November 2nd, 1774, and they were responded to in the same journal, November 12th, by an anonymous writer over the signature “Veritas,” who being well acquainted with this affair from its origin declared Mr. Bryan extremely ill treated, and refuses to be silent when he sees him so injuriously attacked and unjustly represented. The writer declines to enter into a detail



of the manner in which Mr. Bryan obtained the deed, but proceeds to lay bare the inconsistency apparent in the conduct of the Indians with Mr. Bryan, the Governor and the Congress. "The first publication," the statement says, "that fifteen marks were put to the deed, and, speaking of Talachee, says he understood that the paper contained a good talk to the nation, meaning that he knew not the true purport of it, but told Mr. Bryan at the same time that they must carry it to the nation to have it confirmed there. Poor savages, how they were imposed upon, and I hope that every man who reads, without dust in his eyes, will subscribe to the congruity of the assertion."

Commenting on the statement of Justice Stokes, Veritas declares "his opinion in this affair has been given rather precipitately, and is built upon misrepresentations, and as his opinion seems to reflect some censure on my friend (and friendship with me must ever be held sacred), I hope he will pardon me for making some short strictures upon his publication. He says: 'It did and still does appear to me that the Indians were deceived, and that the lease was obtained by misrepresentation;' if I am not mistaken some one of the Indians gave, as a reason for signing the deed, that Mr. Bryan, or some person in his behalf, signified that the lease was for some land to keep a cow-pen or build a store on. Mark this, Mr. Printer, what was before a

good talk is now a lease, and it is confessed that the Indians knew it."

Veritas continues to write: "A third publication, the deposition of Jacob Moniac and Samuel Thomas, these men have sworn upon the Holy Evangelists, yet I dare venture to say if you ask them who the Holy Evangelists are, they will tell you they never heard of them in the Creek Nation, but it was probable they were Indian traders, who existed many years ago, of which no tradition has been handed down to the present tribe of warriors. These men, I say, have been called upon to bear testimony, and after all what have they sworn? Why, that Mr. Bryan asked the Indians for a piece of land, that the Indians asked him 'where do you want it, on the Okonee or on the Altamaha river?' To which he answered, 'I do not want it in this province, for the Governor of Georgia and I do not agree,' and further added he wanted it at a place where he could bring boats up, and that he would come and live among them and would get a number of his friends to come and live with him. Now, let us remark on this tremendous deposition of these important sworn interpreters of the upper and lower Creek Nation, perhaps it may be rash to interfere with such superior beings, but I cannot for the life of me forego the impulse. First, he would make a town larger than Savannah, I suppose to polish and refine them up to town life, and would get a number of friends to come

and live with him, probably two or three thousand cow-pen keepers, with their wives and children at a place where he could bring boats, meaning great ships, to trade with his cattle and renew the days of old Aesop, when man and beast conversed together. Now, where is the deception in all this? Tell me, ye men of candour and ingenuity—to the corrupt and prejudiced I speak out—let them enjoy their own opinions and feed themselves with the poisonings of their own gall. Their arrows, directed against such a man as Jonathan Bryan, would be like the Trojan darts, which made no impression on the shield of Achilles. One word more and I have done. It is asserted in the above mentioned deposition that the chiefs, head men and warriors declared that if any whites had settled those lands supposed to be leased by Mr. Bryan, it would be attended with very bad consequences. The second publication says ‘very disagreeable consequences might have arisen.’ A very serious consideration, truly. But what could those consequences have been, and from what source could they have come? That gentleman would have made all his promises good to the Indians, and if honor, justice and a strict regard to his engagements, could have maintained harmony and peace, Jonathan Bryan bid fair to have gained a valuable acquisition to the Crown, which deliberate envy, private pique, and rancour of heart, have attempted to upset. There are men so tenacious of the honor of the Crown that the

*Summum Bonum* of their happiness would seem to depend on it; but say ye Might Sticklers is it for the advantage of the Crown to set the gratification of a private animosity in competition with your Master's interests? From such Pharisaical loyalty defend me Heaven!

"VERITAS."

In the same issue of the Georgia Gazette, immediately following the communication signed "Veritas," appears this answer from Jonathan Bryan himself:

*"To the Printer: SIR—*Whatever motive might have induced the Honorable Gentlemen to have given their opinions so freely, respecting the obtaining and validity of a lease of a body of land from the Creek Nation upon such testimony as appeared, and was laid before them, is best known to themselves, but this is certain, that had they really been anxious to ascertain the truth, nothing at that time was more practicable. The papers themselves were upon the spot, and had an inquiry been made by men of character and candour, the truth would have appeared, the minds of the public would not have been poisoned with misrepresentation and error. The Honorable Gentlemen have assumed to themselves power which should alarm a people desirous of living as freemen. They publish their opinion as the standard of decision; they even deny the principles of common justice. For instance, admitting their supremacy in deciding points of publick legislation, they have condemned me without even that hear-

ing, which our laws allow the most detestible culprit; notwithstanding my being in town almost every day, when the lease was in agitation and those affidavits were procuring and publication preparing, I was never called on as a gentleman or party concerned to say anything about it while the Indians were down, whereby the matter might be amicably understood and explained to the publick if necessary. I have heard that the Indians appeared to be uneasy when the lease was brought in question and my character so much reprobated for having accepted it, and their acquiescence in the destruction of it was the effect of their tenderness and regard for me, fearing, from what was said, that I should suffer as an individual if it was not destroyed. If the Honorable Gentlemen, or any one else, should doubt the reality of this assertion, they may know that I have it from themselves, and a little time will prove the truth of what I have said, and the honor, attachment and steadiness of the Indians in that particular.

"I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

"JONATHAN BRYAN.

"*Savannah, Ga., Nov. 8th, 1774.*"

These opinions of the witnesses were founded wholly on *ex parte* testimony, obtained in the absence of Mr. Bryan, and without allowing him an opportunity for explanation or defence. Moreover, it was expressed by men all of whom were under the influence of Gov. Wright, ardent loyalists like himself, members

of his council and among the dissenters to the resolutions passed at Tondee's Tavern, August 10th, 1774. John Stuart was Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and like Justice Stokes held his appointment from the Crown. All were in political opposition to Mr. Bryan, and so far as Gov. Wright is concerned, Mr. Bryan openly avowed that he wanted land outside of his province, because he and the Governor of Georgia did not agree. No one undertook to reply to the communication of Jonathan Bryan "To the Printer." But traditional facts, which seemed to throw some light on this matter, were that he was a special favorite with the Indians. Their head men and others came every year to visit him at his house. This tallies with the statement that Talachee admitted his having been at Mr. Bryan's house, after the scene before the congress, and of his having taken a glass of wine there. Talachee was not only the leading chief in the Indian deputation, but the principal speaker in the drama before congress, and it is quite improbable that if he sincerely entertained for himself, or respected the indignant and vindictive sentiments then expressed by his fellows, that he would so soon after have gone to the house of Mr. Bryan and accepted his hospitality. This would not comport with the Indian character, and strongly sustains Mr. Bryan's declaration, that their conduct before the congress as confessed by the Indians to him,



was governed by a fear that he would suffer at the hands of the government.

It may be equally true that they were moved by fears for themselves. They had just obtained a treaty by which all previous treaties were confirmed, existing grievances condoned, all differences settled, and their dramatic rage over the cession to Mr. Bryan only concealed the fear of some consequent disturbance of the terms, or of the total abrogation of the final treaty by the government. They had been told by Governor Wright that the King of England could send him a force sufficient to exterminate the whole Indian nation, and they trembled at the thought of having conceded to an individual what they had denied to the King of England.

It will be noticed that when called by Maria, the interpreter, to state in the presence of the Indians what he had told her to say, Mr. Bryan said the land they had ceded to him was their own: "It neither belongs to the King nor the Governor, and you may do as you please with it."

Gov. Wright himself, in his rebuke to the Indians, admitted their rights, and in a subsequent treaty actually paid the traders, to whom they had become indebted, forty thousand pounds for a large part of the most valuable territory of Georgia, ceded to the Crown by the Indians in consideration of this settlement. This was the price not only of the land but of the amity and



contentment of the Indians, and forever dismissed their rights. But in the transaction with Jonathan Bryan the cession was direct in its nature—no third party like the traders, greedy and oppressive in their claims, were concerned. It retained the future right of the Indians in the fee of the soil, and was only a part of large tracts of uncultivated territory that belonged to that nation. It is true that the annual rental was inconsiderable, but it was costly to clear land and prepare it for cultivation. What consideration, if any, was paid to the Indians? Their lands were seized and ruthlessly granted away under letters of patent in absolute disregard of their rights. In their transaction with Jonathan Bryan their rights were to be kept alive during his tenancy, and at its termination the land would have reverted to the proper owners. In the meantime, it would have been settled, cultivated and so increased in value that the Indians would have gained enormously in the reversion. Florida had been ceded to Great Britain by Spain in 1763. Spain had no title to its territory and but little regard to the treaty, as 25,000 English people in West Florida, as late as 1783, were compelled to seek homes elsewhere on account of Spanish occupation. This exodus would probably have been averted if the real treaty made by Jonathan Bryan with the Indians had not been annulled.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Party strife between Whigs and Tories was culminating. That the people were loyal to the King and the Mother Country cannot be doubted, but unjust and tyrannical laws they had resolved to resist. The majority of the Salzburgers protested against the resolutions of August 10th. Driven like wild beasts from one country to another, they had at last found a home of rest in Georgia, and felt that it would be disloyal to take sides with the colonists against the Mother Country. The strong ties of blood, language and religion bound many others who refused to take sides against England; but the battles of Lexington and Concord aroused the reluctant sentiments of the people and united the colonists. The shedding of blood could not be condoned, and Gov. Wright found many of his most ardent supporters now falling from his ranks. The magazine at Savannah was broken into, and the ammunition it contained, about six hundred pounds, was removed. Some sent to Beaufort, S. C., the remainder secreted. On the night of the 2nd of June, 1775, all the cannon on the Bay at Savannah were spiked, dismantled and thrown down the bluff. A liberty pole was erected, but even then, in testimony of the disposition to reconciliation with the Mother Country, the first regular toast drank on this occasion was to the King, but the second was to American liberty. Sub-

sequently, June 22nd a Council of Safety was appointed, of which William Ewen was president. These and other movements in Georgia, finally culminated in the proceedings of the Provincial Congress, assembled at Savannah on the 4th of July, 1775, which united the province with the other twelve American colonies in resistance to and separation from the British government. From C. C. Jones' History of Georgia we quote the following: "Memorable in the annals of the colony were the proceedings of the Provincial Congress, which assembled at Savannah on the 4th of July, 1775. Every parish was represented, and the delegates were fitting exponents of the intelligence, the dominant hopes, and the material interests of the communities from which they respectively came. This was Georgia's first secession convention. It placed the province in active sympathy and confederated alliance with the other twelve American colonies, practically annulled within her limits, the operation of the objectionable acts of Parliament, questioned the supremacy of the realm, and inaugurated measures calculated to accomplish the independence of the plantation, and its erection into the dignity of a State."

The following committees, submitting proper credentials, then came together at Tondee's Long Room:

*Town and District of Savannah*—Archibald Bulloch, Noble Wimberly Jones, Joseph Habersham, Jonathan Bryan, Ambrose Wright, William Young, John

Glenn, Samuel Elbert, John Houstoun, Oliver Bowen, John McCluer, Edward Telfair, Thomas Lee, George Houstoun, Joseph Reynolds, John Smith, William Ewen, John Martin, Dr. Zubly, William Bryan, Philip Box, Philip Allman, William O'Bryan, Joseph Clay, Seth-John Cuthbert.

*District of Vernonburg*—Andrew Elton Wells, Matthew Roach, Jr.

*District of Acton*—David Zubly, Basil Cowper, William Gibbons.

*Sea Island District*—Col. Deveaux, Col. De Le Gall, James Bulloch, John Morel, John Bohan Girardeau, John Barnard, Robert Gibson.

*District of Little Ogeechee*—Francis Henry Harris, Joseph Gibbons.

*Parish of St. Matthew*—John Stirk, John Adam Treutlen, George Walton, Edward Jones, Jacob Casper Waldhauer, Philip Howell, Isaac Young, Jenkin Davis, John Morel, John Flerl, Charles McCay, Christopher Cramer.

*Parish of St. Philip*—Col. Butler, William LeConte, William Maxwell, Stephen Drayton, Adam Fowler Brisbane, Luke Mann, Hugh Bryan.

*Parish of St. George*—Henry Jones, John Green, Thomas Burton, William Lord, David Lewis, Benjamin Lewis, James Pugh, John Fulton.

*Parish of St. Andrew*—Jonathan Cochran, William Jones, Peter Tarlin, Lachlan McIntosh, William McIn-

tosh, George Threadcraft, John Wereat, Roderick McIntosh, John Witherspoon, George McIntosh, Allan Stuart, John McIntosh, Raymond Demere.

*Parish of St David*—Seth-John Cuthbert, William Williams.

*Parish of St. Mary's*—Daniel Ryan.

*Parish of St. Thomas*—John Roberts.

*Parish of St. Paul*—John Walton, Joseph Maddock, Robert Rae, James Rae, Andrew Moore, Andrew Burney, Leonard Marbury.

*Parish of St. John*—James Screven, Nathan Brownson, Daniel Roberts, John Baker, John Bacon, James Maxwell, Edward Ball, William Baker, William Bacon, John Stevens and John Winn.

This congress reassembled January 20th, 1776, and enacted the first constitution of Georgia, which remained in force until superseded by that of February, 1777.

Among the rules and regulations adopted therein were: "First, there shall be a president and commander-in-chief appointed by ballot in this congress for six months. Second, there shall be in like manner and for the like time also a Council of Safety, consisting of thirteen persons, besides the five delegates to the general congress, appointed to act in the nature of a Privy Council to said president or commander-in-chief. Third, the president shall be invested with all the powers of government not inconsistent with what is hereafter

mentioned, but shall be bound to follow the advice of the said council in all cases whatsoever, and any seven of said committee shall be a quorum for acting."

Archibald Bulloch (the ancestor of President Roosevelt) was president of the congress and commander-in-chief. On 11th of December, 1775, the following members of the Council of Safety were appointed: George Walton, William Ewen, Stephen Drayton, Noble W. Jones, Basil Cowper, Edward Telfair, John Bohan Girardeau, John Smith, Jonathan Bryan, William Gibbons, John Martin, Oliver Brown, Ambrose Wright, Samuel Elbert, Joseph Habersham and Francis Henry Harris.

This council continued to act and legislate for the province during all the initiatory movements of the revolution in Georgia. It ordered the arrest of Gov. Wright, John Mulryne, Josiah Tattnall and Anthony Stokes, and the disarming of all non-associates who refused their parole, not to aid, assist or comfort any of the persons on board his Majesty's ships of war, or take up arms against America in the present unhappy dispute. The officers of the battalion authorized by Congress were commissioned to arrest the sailing of eleven merchant ships, laden with rice, lying at the wharves of Savannah. Appraisement was made of houses in Savannah and its hamlets, of friends to the cause and none others, in order that the owners might be identified for losses in defense of the town. It was also re-



solved, that it was incumbent on the friends of America in this province to defend the "Metropolis," i. e., Savannah, as long as the same shall be tenable; and rather than it be taken and employed by them the same shall be destroyed. Persons holding property were required to report to headquarters in Savannah and to defend the same on pain of suffering all the consequences contained in the foregoing resolutions. These measures were precipitated by the presence at Five Fathom Hole of the British squadron carrying seventy guns under Capt Barclay, and between two and three hundred light infantry and marines under Maj. Grant. The Provincial Congress refused to permit the British commander to secure supplies; he then determined to capture the vessels laden with rice, which were moored on the southern shore of Hutchinson's Island opposite Savannah. For this purpose Capt. Barclay placed one of his vessels in Back river abreast of the town, and sent the Hinchinbrook, a schooner of eight guns, around the head of Hutchinson's Island. The Hinchinbrook went aground, was attacked and would have been captured by a body of riflemen under Maj. Joseph Habersham could boats have been procured, but floating at high water she escaped.

The night of March 2nd Maj. Maitland and Grant landed their troops from the vessel in Back river, and, marching across Hutchinson's Island, took possession of the rice vessel at 4 o'clock in the morning. The au-



thorities in Savannah were not informed of this until several hours later. Capt. Rice, who had dismantled the vessel under orders of the Council of Safety, was forcibly held when he boarded one of the vessels. Capt. Demere and Lt. Roberts were sent unarmed to demand the release of Capt. Rice but they were detained as prisoners. The release of these officers having been demanded and refused, two four-pound shots were fired from the breastworks erected on Yamacraw Bluff by Col. McIntosh. James Jackson and James, the young son of Jonathan Bryan, manned this gun. The British commander then agreed to treat with any twenty officers sent for the purpose. Capts. Screven and Baker were detailed, taking with them twelve of the St. John's Rangers, who were pulled up under the stern of the vessel, when they demanded the return of the captive officers. Capt. Baker, provoked by the insulting language of some one on board, fired at him; a discharge from swivels and small arms from the vessels nearly sunk the boat; but the party, though under this fire as long they were in range, retired with but one man wounded. For about four hours a fire then was kept up between the breastworks at Yamacraw and the British troops on the vessel. The Council of Safety determined to burn these vessels. Among those who volunteered for this service were: Capt. Bowen, John Morel, Lt. James Jackson, Thomas Hamilton and James Bryan. One of the vessels, the Inverness, was fired and turned

adrift, communicating the flames to three others, which were burned. Two escaped to sea, leaving six dismantled. Meantime the British troops, in much confusion, took to the marsh on Hutchinson's Island, where they were galled by the fire of Georgia riflemen and grape from the field pieces. They were finally dislodged, with the aid of the Carolina volunteers and militia, under the command of Col. Stephen Bull, assisted by Maj. Bourquin. The British squadron dropped down to its previous anchorage in Tybee Roads. Capts. Rice and Demere, and Lt. Roberts being still held as prisoners, Anthony Stokes, James Edward Powell, Josiah Tattnall, John Mulryne and others of the Royal Council remaining in Savannah, were arrested in retaliation. About the 20th of March the former were released, therefore the members of the Council were also released, on the condition that if remaining in Savannah they have no communication with the King's troops or ships in this province. The safety of their person and property to be secured so far as the same could be protected by the Council of Safety, or to go on board the ships at Cockspur, and take their apparel, provisions or anything else they might think necessary for their voyage, if they were disposed to leave the province.

## CHAPTER XIV.

The northern portion of Tybee Island was at that time laid off into building lots, and the habitations erected there were used by Gov. Wright, who had escaped from arrest, and had fled to the ships; and also by the officers of the squadron and the soldiers. President Bulloch led an expedition for the purpose, and burned all these buildings, except one occupied by a sick woman and several children.

In June, 1776, Mr. Bryan went to Charlestown, and informed Gen. Lee of the exposed condition of Georgia to the ravages of the British cruisers, whose headquarters were at St. Augustine. Gen. Charles Lee was then in command of the southern department; he called upon the Georgia Council of Safety to send a deputation to confer with him in regard to the condition of Georgia and the best means of defense against both external and internal enemies. Col. Lachlan McIntosh, Jonathan Bryan and John Houstoun were delegated to this duty, and arrived in Charlestown within a few days after the great victory of June 28th, in Charlestown harbor. Without proper preparation of boats, food or medical supplies, Gen. Lee sent the troops to capture St. Augustine. As might have been expected, the expedition proved a failure.

President Bulloch issued a proclamation in 1776, calling a general election between the first and tenth

of September for representatives to meet in Savannah on the first Tuesday in the following October. The convention met, but it was not until February, 1777, that the constitution was finally agreed upon. This was the first regular constitution of Georgia until the meeting of the new legislature, provided for the following May; the pre-existing system of government was continued. President Bulloch was requested, under a resolution of the Council of Safety passed February 22, to take upon himself the whole executive powers of government. Before the end of the month he died, greatly lamented.

Button Gwinnett was elected in his place on the fourth of March, but it is found that on the 26th of the same month Jonathan Bryan was acting as Vice President and commanded in behalf of the State of Georgia. The constitution of 1777 was admirably adapted to the exigencies of the times. President Gwinnett's unhappy difficulty with Gen. McIntosh ending in his death, John Treutlen was elected Governor in May, 1777. Jonathan Bryan was retained in the council.

November, 1778, the field of active operations had been transferred by the British authorities from the north to the south. It was arranged that Gen. Augustine Prevost should send from St. Augustine two expeditions, one by water under Lt. Col. Fuser, the other

by land under Lt. Col. Mark Prevost, the two to unite at Sunbury.

Col Prevost advanced into Liberty county, where he was met by Col. John Baker, with a few mounted militia, and afterwards by Col. John White, with about one hundred continentals and militia, and two light cannon. On the morning of November 28th Col. White was joined by Gen. Screven with twenty militia. They took position about one and a half miles south of Medway church, where an ambuscade could be laid. The enemy, however, conceived the same design, and the advancing parties approached each other. Gen. Screven, who was reconnoitering on foot, was mortally wounded. He was carried into his own house, which was not far distant; when the enemy discovered its ownership they decided to burn the house, and Gen. Screven died while being carried out of it. Col. White, finding himself opposed by superior numbers, retreated; but Prevost, deceived into believing that the former was falling back on supports coming from Savannah, and finding Fuser's command had not reached Sunbury, that the forces of Cols. Elbert and White had united at the Ogeechee, determined to return to St. Augustine, but not until he had burned Medway church, plundered the country and subjected the inhabitants to robbery and insult. Late in November, Col. Fuser again appeared before Sunbury and invested the town by land and water. Col. McIntosh held

Fort Morris with less than 200 men, but when its surrender was demanded, McIntosh replied: "Come and take it," but Fuser, hearing that Prevost had retreated, abandoned the siege. At this time the expedition of Col. Campbell was on its way to the reduction of Savannah, the town being in a very defenseless condition and the people alarmed by the formidable force of the enemy. Jonathan Bryan was at his plantation home called "The Union," on Union creek, about twelve miles from Savannah, in South Carolina. Gov. Houstoun sent the public records by boat to his residence for safe keeping. These records were subsequently sent to Charlestown, later to North Carolina and finally to Maryland, where they remained till the close of the war.

On the 27th of December, 1778, the British had anchored in Tybee Roads. Two men were captured on Wilmington Island and gave the information that Col. Campbell determined to move on Savannah on the same day. At noon on the next day's flood tide there came a man of war, a galley, an armed brig and the armed sloop "Greenwich," followed by the transports in three divisions. The man-of-war moved into the reach opposite Brewton Hill about four o'clock in the afternoon, and drove back two American galleys which had fired upon her. The day being far spent and some of the transports aground, the attack was delayed until daylight next morning, when the first division of the



British landed on the river dam at Brewton Hill. The Light Infantry, under Capt. Cameron, moved forward on the rice field bank leading from the river, to dislodge a company of forty men under Captain Smith, of South Carolina, posted on the summit of the bluff, over thirty feet high, which overlooked and commanded the approach of the enemy. Capt. Smith's force being driven back, joined the main army. The road to Savannah was then laid open and the capture of the metropolis virtually accomplished. Gen. Howe's failure to meet the enemy from the summit of Brewton Hill seems incomprehensible and inexcusable. Here was an elevation rising thirty or more feet above the rice fields, which could be inundated and made to appear like ditches, and rendered almost impassable to those attempting to move in line of battle. The man-of-war intended to cover the landing, being the advance ship of the enemy, lay more than a mile away, beyond effective cannon range. The approach was a narrow causeway, probably a dam not more than four feet on the top, forming a defile on which the attacking party must move in file, exposed to the most fatal fire on front and flank, and yet only forty men were assigned to cover this position, the only one tenable under Gen. Howe.

December 29th, 1778, Col. Elbert, recognizing the strength of this position, urged the importance of holding it, and offered his regiment for the purpose; but



Gen. Howe, rejecting the only position where he could have been defended, threw his army across the Thunderbolt road near where it now crosses Liberty street. Here a traverse was thrown up, mounted with two guns; a hundred paces in front of this was sunk a trench to impede the march of the enemy, and a bridge across what is now Bilbo's Canal was burned. From this centre, the Thunderbolt road, lay the right wing, consisting chiefly of the Carolina regiments of Cols. Huger and Thompson. They rested on a wooded swamp partly covered by houses of the Tattnall plantation, which were occupied by riflemen. The round-house and shops of the Savannah, Florida and Western R. R. are now located on this spot. The left was under the command of Col. Elbert, consisting of a part of the First, Second, Third and Fourth battalions of Georgia Continentals. These rested obliquely to the rear of Col. Elbert's position, now occupied by the gas works extending to the rice fields of Gov. Wright's plantation. To the rear lay the town. The force under Col. Campbell numbered two thousand. The troops under Gen. Howe, other than the militia, numbered six hundred and seventy-two. Although informed of the path which led through the swamp south of the Thunderbolt road and urged by Col. Walton to guard it, Gen. Howe allowed the enemy to pass through unopposed, under the guidance of a negro named Quamino Dolly. Approaching by this path, and close to it, but unobserved by the Amer-

ican outposts, Sir James Baird with the Light Infantry and New York Volunteers attacked and put to flight a body of one hundred militia, which had been posted to guard the road leading to the Ogeechee; that is to say, about where Jones, Charlton and Bull streets now intersect near Jasper's monument. Hearing the firing in the engagement of Sir James Baird, and as assured that the American right had been turned, Col. Campbell, whose line of battle lay across the Thunderbolt road, only a little west of where the present toll gate is, opened in front with his artillery and ordered a general charge. The Americans yielded in a panic and fled. Fortunately Col. Roberts held the causeway next to the Augusta road, across the head of Musgrove creek, for the American right to pass; but the left, under Col. Elbert, in attempting to pass between the causeway and the river, through the rice fields on Springfield plantation, was arrested by Musgrove creek then at high tide. Here many were drowned; those only escaped who could swim. The capital of the State was now in the hands of the enemy.

According to Gen. Moultrie's account of the History of the Revolution in South Carolina and Georgia: "Gen. Howe called a council of his field officers, who advised him not to retreat, but stay and defend Savannah. This was the most ill advised, rash opinion that could be given. It is absurd to suppose that six or seven hundred men, some of them raw recruits, could

stand against two or three thousand as good troops as the British had, led by Col. Campbell, an active, brave, experienced officer. Gen. Howe should have retreated with his men up the country, as he had certain information that Gen. Lincoln was marching with a body of men to join him, and did actually arrive at Purisburg on the third day of January, only four days after his defeat. Gen. Howe was tried by courtmartial for the loss of Savannah and acquitted."

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## CHAPTER XV.

While a man of Mr. Bryan's strength of character must have found many pleasures in life, probably not the least of these was that of having his sons united with him in heart and purpose, through the eventful years of his country's struggle for liberty. His first born son, Hugh, and Dr. William Bryan, sat with him as members of the Continental Congress in Savannah, July, 1775, also John Houstoun, who married his daughter, Hannah. From their number were elected the delegates to the Congress the next year in Philadelphia, who were directed to vote for the independence of the colonies.

But many sorrows also had been his portion, probably that which caused his deepest grief, was the sudden death December 19th, 1776, of his son Hugh by a

fall from his horse. Hugh Bryan was thirty-eight years old, and a deacon in the Presbyterian church. How tender the bond between this father and son, who were so congenial, can readily be understood.

We can also be assured of his delight in the bravery of his young son James (who was a lieutenant in the Continental line of the Georgia brigade), the part he took at the battle of Savannah, and in the destruction of the ships.

With this son James, his wife and daughter, Mrs. Morel, he was now, three days after the reduction of Savannah at his plantation, "The Union," where the public records had been sent by Gov. Houstoun for safe keeping. That night Lt. Clarke, hoping to capture Gov. Houstoun, despatched up Union creek to this plantation the "Phoenix" or Fowey man-of-war; he did not find the Governor, but took Jonathan Bryan and his son James prisoners. His daughter, Mrs. Morel, pleaded on bended knees with Sir Hugh Parker for her aged father's release; she was treated with rudeness and contempt. They were taken to New York and placed on prison ships, where they suffered great hardships.

McCall's History says: "Many gentlemen, who had been accustomed to ease and affluence, were consigned to these abominable prison ships. Among the number was the venerable Jonathan Bryan, bending under the weight of years, whose daughter, when she was entreating Sir Hugh Parker to soften the sufferings

of her father, was treated by him with vulgar rudeness."

The following report was sent from Gen. Moultrie to Col. Dart, January 20th, 1779: "We have nothing from the enemy these several days; they are lying still in their quarters and we in ours. We frequently have flags going to and with necessaries to our unfortunate prisoners. We are just going to send one with necessaries for poor old Mr. Bryan, who is ordered to prepare himself to go to New York."

The following letters express more eloquently than conjecture can suggest the sufferings of the captives, and the agony of separation from the wife and mother:

"LONG ISLAND, June 2nd, 1780.

"*My Dear Wife:*

"We still reside on Long Island, where our expenses are high. In this place are few instances of generosity or hospitality, but without money we cannot subsist; I have drawn on Mr. Basil Cowper for sixty pounds in favor of Mr. Ralph MacNair & Co.; with these gentlemen I have had an extensive credit, and they must be paid. My dear wife Mollie, if there should be any difficulty with Mr. Cowper, who, I believe, would be glad to serve me, please to apply to our daughter, Mrs. Morel, who, if you are not in cash, will assist you in settling this affair to the satisfaction to

those concerned. I am, dear wife, your ever affectionate husband,

“JONATHAN BRYAN.

“To Mrs. Mary Bryan,  
“Brampton (near Savannah), Ga.”

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“LONG ISLAND, June 3rd, 1780.

“*Dear Wife:*

“Yours of the 25th of March came to my hand, and gave me great pleasure to find you once more in hopes of doing well. I reflect with concern on the many difficulties you have gone through, and the gloomy prospect yet before you, of spending the dregs of life under a series of trouble, which, I doubt not, will be sanctified to you. Our separation from each other sits heavy on my mind, and I reflect, with great sorrow, on being deprived of the happy seasons of bending our knees in union before the Throne of Grace. Our prayers are recorded in God’s Book ; our tears are preserved in His bottle, and future destination is in His hands.

“I expect to see you no more on this side of time, as I decline fast, but shall meet you in Heaven, where the wicked will cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. I have no prospects of an exchange, and I know not how long I may remain in a situation where I am a burthen to myself and expense to you. Remember me to our dear children, and also to our poor



slaves, if we have any left. I have had no account of affairs since I have been in this place, or whether any of our property yet remains in your hands. I shall conclude with prayer that God may, in time of distress, hide you under His pavilion and cover you under the hollow of His hand.

“Your affectionate husband,

“JONATHAN BRYAN.

“P. S.—Our son James is well, and sends his dutiful respects to you and love to his brother and sisters. The bearer, Mr. Jackson, has treated me with great decency and friendship, and I beg that his kindness may be returned.”

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“BRAMPTON, GA., June 11th, 1780.

“*Dear Mr. Bryan :*

“I received your two letters of 22nd of August and 19th of November, informing me of your and James’ health, which gave me the greatest satisfaction, not having heard from you for a length of time. I wrote to you in November last, and shall be punctual in doing so by every opportunity. Since your absence I returned to Brampton, where I now reside with most of our property, and hope to do well. My treatment has been exceedingly perlight, everything considered ; have little reason to complain. My greatest concern is for yourself and James, fearing you may be in want of money. At present it is not in my power to remit ; am



truly sorry it has not been done before this, but am in great hopes will be able shortly. Be assured every effort will be employed to do so. I think, by application to the commanding officer for self and James, a parole might be procured to return to Georgia and reside with me. We are far advanced in years, and according to the course of nature cannot live long. Could this request be granted, I shall look on it as the most happy event of my life; on my part, will do everything in my power to promote. I pray that God, in His great goodness, may comfort and support us in all our afflictions. I heard from Hannah a month ago, at which time she was well at Jacksonborough, S. C. Mr. Morel, Mrs. Cuthbert, Mrs. Cowper, with their families, are well; their children have been inoculated for the small-pox and safely recovered, also myself inoculated in my old age and safely recovered, bless God, with scarcely a day's sickness. I do most earnestly recommend the keeping up your spirits with fortitude, and being resigned to the dispensation of God, who will, in His own good time, relieve us from every affliction.

"From, dear Mr. Bryan, your affectionate wife,

"MARY BRYAN.

"Billy is with us, and joins with the greatest love to self and James.

"When you write, please direct your letter to Mr. Basil Cowper.

“Directed to Jonathan Bryan, Esq., Prisoner of War at Long Island, to the particular care of the commissarys of prisoners.”

“I expect to see you no more on this side of time,” wrote Mr. Bryan from his prison on Long Island to his wife, thinking that his own declining health would terminate his life before he would be released from captivity. But while he was yet in imprisonment, the faithful and devoted partner of forty-four years of union, yielded up her life March, 1781. Mrs. Nancy Cuthbert, daughter of Joseph Bryan, was present at her death bed. Up to this time Jonathan and James Bryan had been in captivity two years and two months. How much longer this continued is not known, but the sufferings of the aged captive and his son, in at least a portion of this long and inhuman confinement, may be inferred from McCall’s History: “Some of the Georgia prisoners, who were exchanged for a like number sent from Charleston in March or April, were so emaciated when they arrived in camp that they were obliged to be carried from the boats in which they were brought from the prison ships. They complained highly of the ill treatment which they had experienced on board the filthy, floating dungeons, of which their countenances and emaciated bodies exhibited condemning testimony. They asserted that they had been subsisted on condemned pork, which nauseated the stomach, and oatmeal so rat-eaten that swine would not fare on it. That

the staff of officers and members of the council from Savannah shared in common with the soldiery—even the venerable Bryan was obliged to partake of such repasts or die of hunger. In consequence of such maltreatment five or six died daily, whose bodies were taken from the prison ships to the nearest marshes and trodden in the mud, from whence they were soon exposed by the washing of the tide, and at low water the prisoners beheld the carrion-crows picking the bodies of their departed companions ; about one-third of the prisoners perished.”

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## CHAPTER XVI.

It is related that Jonathan Bryan took part in the operations of Gen. Wayne in the spring of 1782. This confirms the fact of his exchange.

During his captivity stirring events had occurred in Georgia. After the fall of Savannah, Sunbury and Augusta the enemy were virtually in possession of all Georgia. Gov. Wright resumed his administration July 14th, 1779. The property of those who did not espouse the royal cause was plundered by the troops, or sequestered to the use of the Crown. Loyalists alone were permitted to sell their produce and only to loyal purchasers. The families of such as had adhered to the cause of their country were stripped of their

property by plundering enemies before it could be removed to places of security. Bandits, under the name of Loyalists, were let loose to pillage them of all that was movable. Negroes, stock, furniture of every description, clothing about their persons, ear and finger-rings and breast-pins were considered good prizes. Children were beaten, to extort from them the secret deposits of valuable property. Obscene language was used ; personal insults offered to women, and life under such conditions was insupportable. Many were obliged to abandon the country and seek a dependent residence in the adjoining states in midwinter. Those who had practiced such cruelties were not spared when the fortunes of war threw them into the hands of their adversaries. Retaliation on both sides became the order of the day, and the war begun for freedom became a war for extermination. February 14th, 1779, the country became the scene of the most active warfare. A brilliant victory was won by the Americans at Kettle Creek, and minor operations around Augusta proved successful. Col. Campbell evacuated some points in February ; much annoyed by the Americans, he withdrew to Hudson's Ferry on the Savannah river.

The American force, under Gen. Ashe, was defeated in March. Leaving Gen. Moultrie with 1,200 men at Purisburg and Black Swamp to watch the enemy in the event of an attempt to move into Carolina, Gen. Lincoln led the remainder of the American force

towards Augusta, but discovering that Gen. Prevost had advanced into Carolina and threatened Charleston, he halted at Silver Bluff, on the Savannah river, in April, 1779. But Prevost's operations against Charleston were unsuccessful, and, retreating by way of the sea islands, he returned to Savannah after posting at Port Royal a detachment of 800 men under Col. Maitland, destined to a distinguished part in the British defense of Savannah, October, 1779. His army passing through the best settled district of South Carolina bore away about 3,000 slaves, who were sold in the West Indies. About 1,000 followed the army and were lost, perishing in the streams, which they could not cross, or in the woods from disease and want, or from the cruelties of the soldiery. Jones says in his History of Georgia: "To this day Otter Island is strewn with their bones. One million dollars and valuables of all kinds were taken from South Carolina." Ramsey says: "The British carried rice barrels full of plate, which they had taken from the inhabitants. The repositories of the dead were in several places broken into, and the graves searched for hidden treasures. What was destroyed by the soldiers was supposed to be of more value than what they carried off. Feather beds were ripped open for the ticking. Windows, chinaware, looking-glasses and pictures were dashed to pieces. Not only the larger animals were wantonly destroyed, but the licentiousness of the soldiers.

diers was so great that nothing within their reach, however insignificant, was permitted to live. The gardens, which had been improved with great care and ornamented with foreign plants, were laid waste."

These ravages were repeated in Georgia and Carolina when Sherman, with the largest invading army of modern times, passed through a breadth of country thirty miles wide, from Atlanta to Savannah, and later to the capital of South Carolina. Thousands of living witnesses can attest the truth of his report to Abraham Lincoln: "Not a crow could find its rations in a day's journey."

Jonathan Bryan's planting interests lay within the scenes of ruthless plunder and devastation. Finally on the 9th of October, 1779, the combined French and American forces, under d'Estaing and Gen. Lincoln, were hurled against the British defenses about Savannah and were repulsed with great loss. Among those who fell were Count Pulaski, Col. Jones, of Liberty county, Aide to Gen. McIntosh, and Sergeant Jasper. May, 1780, Gen. Lincoln withdrew his army from Georgia, and attempted the defense of Charlestown, which was captured by Sir Henry Clinton, May 12th, 1780. The defense of Charlestown was even more injudicious than that of Savannah under Gen. Howe. In the former case, Gen. Washington himself declared that the impracticability of defending the bar amounted to the loss of the town and garrison. The repulse of the Ameri-



cans at Savannah and the fall of Charleston seemed to destroy the hopes of the republicans in Georgia, and many of them resumed allegiance to the Crown. Some retired to their homesteads, seeking to make subsistence for their families; others remained under arms and continued the war with unabated vigor, but with varying success. Augusta was besieged, but the investment was raised on the approach of reinforcements. In April, 1781, movements were renewed against Augusta and the town was surrendered June 5th, 1781. Augusta then became the capital of the State. In August of the same year Nathan Brownson was elected Governor, and James Bryan, who, with his father, had returned from captivity, was elected Treasurer of the State with a salary of one hundred and fifty pounds per annum. Between the fall of Savannah in December, 1778, and June, 1781, great weakness existed in both the Royal and Republican Governments of the State. Neither could assemble a quorum of the Legislative department. In January, 1782, a Legislature assembled at Augusta and carried into effect the laws previously enacted, confiscating the estates of Loyalists. As taxation was impossible, a system of credit was adopted to pay the militia and maintain the government. Gov. Martin had succeeded Gov. Brownson, and in his administration the war was ended in Georgia. In 1782 Gen. Anthony Wayne was appointed by Gen. Greene to com-



mand in Georgia. He crossed the Savannah river January 12th, made his headquarters at Ebenezer, and Gov. Martin removed the seat of government to that town. The British were virtually driven from the soil except from Sunbury and Savannah. Forays of the enemy from these places were invariably driven back, while the Republicans, under the daring lead of Col. James Jackson, pressed their assaults almost to the gates of Savannah. They burned the rice stacks of Gov. Wright, on which Col. Campbell had formed his line of battle in December, 1778. Ramsey says, in his History of the Revolution: "On the 21st of May, 1782, Col. Brown, at the head of a considerable party, marched out of the garrison at Savannah, with the apparent intention of attacking the Americans, consisting of sixty horse and forty infantry. The Americans were led by Col. White of the cavalry and Capt. Parker of the infantry to a spirited charge, in which forty of the men commanded by Col. Brown were killed or wounded, about twenty taken prisoners and the remainder obliged to shelter themselves in the swamp under cover of the night. Mr. Jonathan Bryan, a respectable citizen of the State of Georgia, though nearly eighty years of age, was among the foremost on this occasion, and showed as much fire and spirit as could be exhibited by a young soldier in the pursuit of military fame."

In this restricted condition the British commander, Gen. Clarke, invited the assistance of the Creek

Indians, and Guristersigo, a bold and skillful chief, led towards Savannah a band of about three hundred warriors. By swift secret marches Guristersigo crossed the whole territory of Georgia undetected and reached the vicinity of Savannah. Finding a picquet of Gen. Wayne's command stationed nearly in his path near Savannah, he made arrangements to attack the picquet. He was not aware that Gen. Wayne never camped on the same ground two successive nights and had changed positions on the evening of June 22nd, his main force occupying that of the picquet. Nor was Wayne aware of the proximity of the Indian force, believing that no attack would come except from the direction of Savannah, he had posted but one sentinel in his rear. Capt. Parker's Light Infantry, which had come in late, fatigued by several days' duty, was ordered to the rear near the artillery. In the meantime, soon after nightfall June 23, 1782, Guristersigo commenced his silent march; about three o'clock in the morning he had reached the vicinity of the American camp and formed his order of attack. He expected to find no resistance, the solitary sentinel was slain and the whole force of Guristersigo at once assailed the camp. The Americans were encamped on the Gibbons plantation, near Savannah, the house being occupied by Gen. Wayne. They were promptly aroused on finding an enemy among them, and Capt. Baker fell back to the Gibbons house, behind which was the quarter guard.

The general ordered the guard to attack with bayonets and before the main force, under Col. Posey, could come up from the camp the Indians had been driven from the cannon, which they were trying to turn upon the Americans. This advantage was gained by the liberal use of the bayonet and sword. Orders had been given to depend exclusively on these weapons, and that this might be complied with the flints were taken out of the muskets of the infantry. Gen. Wayne, whose horse had been killed under him, participated in the militia with his light troops. Guristersigo, with his white guides and seventeen of his warriors, was killed, the remainder fled. In the pursuit twelve men were taken and executed. The American loss did not exceed twelve killed and wounded. This extraordinary conflict was the last battle of the war on Georgia soil, occurring at a time after Gov. Wright had informed Gen. Wayne of the proceedings in Parliament looking to an adjustment between England and the United States and a cessation of hostilities. This proposition had been forwarded to Gen. Greene and by him to Congress a month before the battle of June 23rd. Sir Guy Carleton had dated his order from New York for the evacuation of both Savannah and Georgia on the afternoon of July 11, 1782.

The British having evacuated Savannah in the morning, Gen. Wayne took possession of the town with his troops. The preliminary treaty of peace was Nov.

20th, 1782, and the final treaty Sept. 3rd, 1783. Soon after Gen. Wayne joined Gen. Greene, leaving Col. Jackson with his legion at Savannah.

Jones' History says: "The whole population of Georgia at that time, bond and free, did not exceed thirty thousand souls. Deplorable was the condition of Georgia; for forty-two long months had she been a prey to rapine, oppression, fratricidal strife and poverty. Fear, unrest, the brand, the sword, the tomahawk had been her portion. In the abstraction of negro slaves, in the burning of dwellings, in the obliteration of plantations, by the destruction of agricultural implements, and by theft of domestic animals and personal effects, it is estimated that at least one-half of the available property of the inhabitants had during this period been swept away. Real estate had depreciated in value; agriculture was at a standstill, and there was no money with which to repair the losses and inaugurate a new era of prosperity. The lamentations of the widow and orphan were heard in the land. These not only be-moaned their dead, but cried aloud for food."

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## CHAPTER XVII.

Amid scenes like these Jonathan Bryan's last years were spent; but his heart was full of gratitude, as once again he sat by his hearthstone at Brampton with his

daughter—Mrs. Richard Wyly, formerly Mrs. John Morel, and his sons James and Dr. William Bryan.

The will of Jonathan Bryan, the first on record in Chatham county, shows that he owned forty-eight slaves at the time of his death. These must have been truly loyal and remained with the family of their own choice, as both the Indians and the British would gladly have aided their departure from Brampton had they wished to leave the place.

In 1784 we find Jonathan Bryan a trustee with Robert Bolton of the Presbyterian church in Savannah. Involuntarily the thought arises that it was of such as he that Christ said: "Well done good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

From the Georgia Gazette of March 13th, 1788, we quote the following: "On Sunday last died at his place, near Savannah, in the eightieth year of his age, the Hon. Jonathan Bryan, Esq., who had been for fifty years an inhabitant of this State; both under former and present governments he filled several important stations. The many virtues which this gentleman possessed, both of a social and private nature, will not be readily forgotten. Having at an early day removed into this State, he acquired a thorough and accurate knowledge of the country. This enabled him, and his generous heart always inclined him, to render that aid

to the new settlers that he may be justly styled as one of the principal Fathers and Founders of Georgia. Zealous in the cause of Christ, he considered modes of worship but a secondary, while a great first principle with him in all true religion was universal charity. Being in the late war taken prisoner, he was made to undergo a series of persecutions and hardships scarcely to be paralleled, and never to be justified; but the strength of his constitution, and the unshaken firmness of his mind, even at the advanced age of seventy years, rose superior to all difficulties, and at length brought him to die in the arms of peace. Thus having spent a life marked with many private trials, and literally exhausted his days chiefly in the service of his country, he expired, or rather ceased to breathe without a pain, a murmur or a groan." His remains were interred in the family vault at Brampton.

In December, 1864, war's rude alarms once more swept over Georgia. Just in proportion to the greater numbers engaged in the conflict was the destruction wrought. From peaceful homes on Georgia plantations, Sherman, with an army of 65,000 men, drove tens of thousands of defenseless negroes for a breastwork before him, and reached Savannah, December 22nd. Before the capitulation of the city, as in the days of the revolution, all that was evil in man seemed to triumph. It is beyond the power of words to express the fiendish outrages perpetrated in the vicinity of the city. The



old church of the Salzburgers at Ebenezer, built in 1767, was used as a stable and the records destroyed. Many new made graves were unearthed in search for hidden treasure, the bodies rolled out of coffins and often left uncovered. The vault at Brampton did not escape desecration.

Truly Georgians who have learned well the lessons history has taught, count not her wealth or greatness in the things that perish. Her priceless heritage is the character of her sons who have shed lustre on the pages of history, or in the quiet avocations of life been to her a bulwark of strength. Though being dead they yet speak, to teach those for whom the drama of life is opening, that "there are heroes without the laurel, and conquerors without the triumph." That the clarion still sounds that calls them into service for God and Home and Native land. Problems of government, social, domestic and commercial conditions have assumed new relations. These call for the same courage, wisdom and noble impulse that impelled her loyal sons of other days to action, in field or forum, whenever her peace was disturbed or her rights were threatened.

ISABELLA REMSHART REDDING.

*Waycross, Ga., September, 1901.*











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